

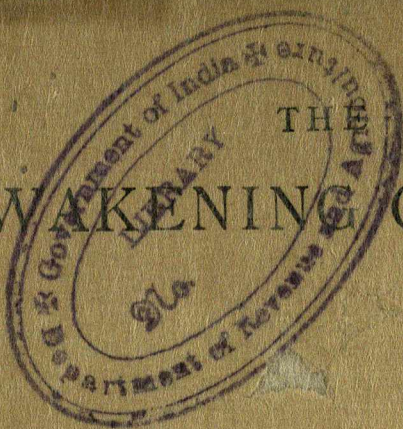


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To
TWO
WHO TOOK MUCH INTEREST
IN THE JOURNEY
BUT WHO NEVER SAW
THIS BOOK



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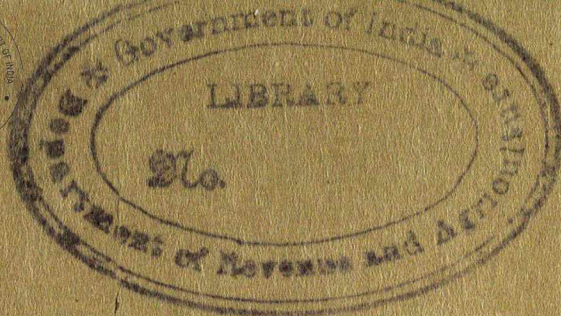
OPINIONS

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PART I
A FOREWORD



CSL

I

APOLOGIA PRO LIBRO MEO

I MAY be expected to apologise for this book. I paid but a brief visit to India, and was called back by a General Election before I had completed my plans. Some of my opinions might therefore be revised on a more intimate acquaintance with the land, its people, and its government.

I began to write for two purposes. In the first place, I promised to contribute to *The Daily Chronicle* (which I have to thank for many kindnesses, not the least of which is the liberty to use the matter I contributed to it) a few articles on impressions I formed on the spot; and in the second place, I began on my way home, whilst my experiences were still fresh in my memory, to put down on paper the opinions I had formed with a view to testing how far I could explain and support them. This test—originally meant to be a purely private exercise—and those articles are the basis of this book.



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When I reached Bombay on my way back I was taken to task by an Anglo-Indian newspaper for having expressed opinions with which it did not agree. It wisely did not discuss the opinions; it merely said I had no business to hold them. Its state of mind is typical—I regret to have to believe it—of the majority of Anglo-Indians. They assume that no one can understand them and their problems unless his eyes have been blinded by the Indian sun, and his mind moulded by Anglo-Indian habits for a generation. Their reply to criticisms is not reasons, but the recital of dogmas which cannot be explained to the perspiring stranger, they believe, because the truth embodied in them cannot be grasped by him. It belongs to a world in which he is a child. To such persons this book will be but further evidence of the wickedness of the world, the impertinence of men, and the bitterness of the cup to be drained by Anglo-Indians.

But in India, as elsewhere, one very soon discovers that there is not one “man on the spot,” but two. That section of Anglo-India represented by the best known newspapers is only a majority. There is alongside it a minority which knows India, I think, more intimately, and has retained



under Eastern conditions the best of our Western ethics more successfully. There is also the Indian himself, who must still count for something in Indian government; and I venture to hope that these sections may find in the following pages something to justify my publishing them.

When I had finished my test of self-examination, I found myself in a camp almost by myself, the reason being, I think, that I went out with the ideas of modern collectivism in my mind. Whilst these made me welcome the more political side of Indian nationalism, they forbade my sympathising with some of its economic demands, such as Protection and the Permanent Settlement found in Bengal. I thus at one moment take my place with one bedfellow and at the next am with another.

After conversations with men of importance in many different walks of life in India, I often pondered over the difficulty of getting a mental grasp of what India is. The thing eluded me. It was like attempting to pick up mercury between the fingers; and I certainly make no pretensions to have gripped it yet. But this conclusion I think is sound. A person can go to India for a short time, a flying visit, and if he



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has carefully prepared himself before by becoming acquainted with Indians here and by reading authoritative statements made by men in the various camps of Indian life and activity; if he uses his time judiciously, sees the right people, and turns conversation into the most profitable channels; if he has the spiritual faculty of sympathy with men of other race than his own, he may get a far better general view than those who have lived long in the land. He will not have a very accurate and detailed knowledge of the trees; he will have a truly valuable conception of the forest. In fact, the trees and the forest are rarely seen by one mind. The one obscures the other. Thus it comes about that a shrewd observer, who will make numerous mistakes in describing details, will understand the general tendency of the sum total of Indian life more accurately than one who has lived so long in the country that he has ceased to see it except as a moving mass of detail.

The fresh eye is an important element in investigation and criticism; and this is truer in India than in any land upon which I have set foot. In India, habit counts for far more than it does here. The country is governed by a bureaucracy which, though



officers may come and officers may go, goes on for ever, without a break beyond the fluctuations in policy natural to its own being. No General Election changes its majority, no new Premier comes to alter its course, no Parliamentary complication modifies its will. It runs in ruts. It has no machinery for self-criticism.

I have tried to be just both in my appreciations and my depreciations. Not a sentence has been written without a recollection of the many proofs I had that there is generosity, fair-mindedness, and a desire to do right in all classes and all races in India. If any one reading these pages detects in them an unhappy suggestion that all is not well in India, that unsettlement is getting worse, that we have not yet found the way of peace, that the West might be more hesitating in asserting the superiority of its materialist civilisation, I confess he will only have detected what is actually my feeling.

Beyond this I have only to say that the book is just what it says it is—the impressions of one who whilst in India tried to steep his mind in that of India.



II

ON THE WAY

THE East comes far to meet the traveller from the West. He threads his way through the fleets of commerce which speed through the English Channel hastening to fulfil the desires of a people which seek the gains which the moth and rust corrupt and the rival steals away; he enters the Bay and is tossed and buffeted by the waves of the rude West which roll shorewards in egotistical pride like an unconquered army buoyant with a lust for new conquests; he skirts the coasts of Portugal upon swelling seas that heave like the breast of a strong man, passing slowly from the stage of mighty effort to that of peaceful slumber. The spell of the East has come thus far. Next morning Tangier gleams beneath the tawny mountains of Africa; the light glistens on a sleepy sea; the hills are parched unto death by the hot embrace of the ardent sun; Gibraltar rises bare and blistering in front of him. When he



lands the hot air streams up from the dusty ground and dries the moisture in his eyes. The army of occupation is not merely foreign, it belongs to another world—it is like a stray plant carried far from its natural home struggling to master uncongenial air, unsuitable soil, and deadly surroundings, and, by changing its root and stem and leaves, to adapt itself to its new conditions.

The heat increases; more passive becomes the sea; the mountains rise up bare, broken, jagged, screened by hot, shimmering air, cooled by no kindly plant, rounded by no gentle rain; and the traveller feels that he himself is changing. He seems to be gliding as though in sleep into a land of dreamy laziness, into peace, into the void.

Most weary seemed the sea, weary the oar,
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.

In a word, the spell of the East is taking hold of him.

At Marseilles the boisterous West pours upon him like a douche from a spout, blows upon him like the mistral. The special train arrives. There is a general bustle, a hurrying and a scurrying, and from the mass emerges the particular. It is bouncing and talkative and overdressed.



It holds up its skirts and reveals buckled shoes, daintily stockinged ankles, and billows of white lace. Or it may be of the other gender, and then it is proudly official, drilled into hauteur, groomed and cut in military fashion. Its cheeks are smooth and glossy, its hair has been patiently attended to, its head is poised with pride. Male or female, it is imperial and imperious. It is a ruling class. It is the West agitating the spirit slipping away into the dream-land of the East. It is like the hand of the wakeful shaking the shoulder of the sleeper. It is a jar, an annoyance. They say that when one is nearly drowned one wanders amidst pleasant pastures and on happy paths and that then the return to life is through horror-haunted ways beset by pain. Thus does the arrival at Marseilles of the superior ones on their way to India disturb one who has seen Tangier and Gibraltar in the sun, and who has come so far upon a smooth Mediterranean sea.

But the chatter dies, the bustle becomes languid, and as the days go the East creeps back steadily into the soul. We walk in the cool morning miles and miles round and round the deck; we return in the evening to the same violent exercise.



But the spell has hold of us. At night the moon throws on the water its silvery highway out into the infinite; the stars in the deep, transparent space of the heavens are beacon lights which seem to shine as points in the eternal vastness—little points which are footholds for the imagination journeying through the illimitable; and during the day the cruel glitter of the sun, the subdued energy of the sea, the stifling heat of the air, combine to oppress us into a subjection of being, and an acquiescence in the decrees of the powers that created us and of which we are the play-things. We recline on deck reading novels; the little sillinesses of social life become the occupation of the day; a queen of tragedy holds court on one part of the deck, one of happier dignity and equally alluring robes holds court on another part; young things who have just left their solitary skiffs and have begun to row down life together, sit side by side communing by glances, leaving each other only to fetch a chocolate box or other such sweet offering; old things who have glided through those green glories of the river of Time and have come to the more sober banks where the stream gets broader and the sound of the surf of the ocean



where all things end is beginning to be heard, find energy for a rubber of whist under the deck awning; but upon all falls the languor of the tropics, upon all comes the spirit of the East, the insensibility to Time, the carelessness regarding things.

By and by the spell becomes no sweet, dreamy thing. Port Said is reached: the sin of the East links itself in your arm immediately you have paid your landing fee to the Arab at the jetty, and you walk into the dusty, smelling streets picketed by blackguards. Mosques, crowds of figures in long draperies, heat, tell you that the West is far behind. You have glided into a new world as men do at death. You are a stranger inquisitive and gaping, a child opening its eyes upon a new scene. Then come the deserts, tawny as the hide of a lion, with their queer camel creatures, and their robed, lithe children. The sun scorches everything up. Its breath is the breath of fire. It rises with menaces in its bloodshot eye; it crosses the heavens, blinding like a globe of molten silver; it sets in an expanse of the most gorgeous colours. Pursuing it, rises the moon, larger, redder, nearer than the West knows it; and even the winds of night come as from the mouth of the pit.



The unrefreshed body tosses in its sleep. It is haunted by nightmares; the ship is a prison; the Furies are the jailers. One struggles with something, something that is unseen, that is everywhere, that is terrible. The days are long; the nights are longer. Thus one goes down the Red Sea past the Arabian coast, catching glimpses of its barrenness, until Aden, a parched cinder, marks the limits of greatest torture. The spell has been accomplished. The grip of the East is upon the traveller. The sea, soothed into a glassy indifference, swells and heaves around him, and, having undergone the discipline, he awakes one morning to find clouds upon green hills, boats with vast sails and of old-world shapes gliding upon the waters, a white, ghostly town between the clouds and the sea. It is Bombay.

And yet the spell is not complete. The magic, like so many things of the East, is losing its virtue. Sitting in the shade of the hotel, the meaning of the ship which he has just left appears before the wanderer like a pageant seen between sleep and wakefulness. I have written that the languor of the East falls upon all. It does, and yet it does not. The men sitting in



long deck chairs, dozing over the silliest of novels, sometimes pull themselves together, and the will of the West grapples with the acquiescence of the East. They appear on the morning of landing in their helmets. The novels, the flirtations, the listlessness are of the past. They are energetic, they are again imperial and imperious ; they are of the governing caste, the masters of men. The change is miraculous. They are lords returning home. North, and South, and East they go to their districts and their regiments, to govern and overawe, to rule and be vigilant. In the crowd they are like magnet centres from which forces emanate and to which forces are drawn. To what end is this peculiar state of things tending ? What system is it working out ? What design is it completing ? These questions will demand an answer more insistently and peremptorily than they have hitherto done ; but what the answer is to be in the end only a vain man will dogmatise about. Its broken syllables, like a few parts of a shattered record tablet, may be read in the work of these ruling wills as seen in India to-day ; and it is my hope that in what I write I may be able to put some of those syllables together.



CSL

PART II
IMPRESSIONS



I

IN BARODA

I REACHED Baroda before the sun had risen, and in the dim light of the railway station received, in most excellent English, the greetings of some officials. The waning moon lay on the black sky like a chaste piece of fine jewellery. Fires glimmered amidst trees; a little tram stood a short way off lit with oil lamps; a chattering of men hidden in the shadows, and an unhappy and broken call of birds met us as we emerged into the darkness. Thus I came to the capital of the most modern and enlightened of the Indian rulers. The early morning and the thoughts it brought into being were peculiarly befitting the circumstances.

It is easy to criticise Baroda: I have heard a good deal of that since I reached India. But Baroda can stand criticism. It is incomplete, it is inconsistent in detail, it is unfinished, it lapses into barbaric absurdities—as Gothic architecture does.

There are astrologers at its Court. It



is solemnly recorded in official publications that when the late Prince—a victim of Eton and Oxford culture—was about to be married, the festivities were fixed by the Court soothsayers. To bring this event off a Committee was appointed to assist the Prince, and a volume was published containing an inventory of eligible young ladies—I am not sure, however, but that is only an adaptation of Western ways which the Maharajah may have observed during one of his own visits to us. When the new palace was complete the Annual Report of the State informs us (1907-8) that amongst “the most notable events of the year” was “the removal of the State throne and gods . . . with due pomp and necessary religious ceremony.” In the city itself no trace of the West is to be found, unless it be the tramway. The open booths, the all but nude men, women, and children squatting amongst the merchandise, the crowds, the noise, bear no traces of the British Raj. We might as well never have fought Plassey or quelled the Mutiny.

But in the densest corner of the city we were dragged up a steep flight of stairs, and on the first floor we discovered some twenty little mites in quaint draperies and



with sad, wise faces writing cabalistic characters on plates. It was a compulsory school, one of the 1,200 which are now to be found all over the State, established since 1903, when the Maharajah decided to decree that elementary education was thenceforth to be free and compulsory. Puffing up after us came the schoolmaster in the limited garb of a Turkish bath attendant. The worthy man had been down gossiping in the bazaar and had rushed up to show the sahib and the memsahib what wonderful things his pupils could do.

Not far off was a technical school housed in part in the old palace where the Gaekwars used to be married. There we saw pupils do pattern-making, engineering, carpentry, weaving, dyeing. Near at hand were chemical laboratories and art studios. Elsewhere girls were being taught the same lessons as boys, and were, in addition, being initiated into such domestic arts as cooking and sewing. Above all was the College and its adjunct the Museum, European in everything except in the insufferable heat of its atmosphere. British art, British philosophy, British text-books! The temperature, the glimpses of palms through the windows, the bullock carts passing along the road in front, the graceful figures with bowls

and jars on their heads—had it not been for these we should have thought we were at home.

We visited other institutions, from the jail to the doss-house, from the menagerie to the public well, and everywhere the testimony was the same. In Baroda the will of man is struggling with his inheritance and with nature in the spirit of what we call "Progress." Heads of departments come and talk and bring their Blue Books as offerings to the Western inquirer. In the jails they have adopted the Borstal system; they have just founded a new State Bank; they have appointed an economic expert to advise as to the industries which can best be carried on within their boundaries. He has begun chrome tanning and is hunting for paying minerals. The monopoly of ports like Bombay and Kurachee is being challenged, and other harbours in Baroda territory are being surveyed. They have solved the problem of religious instruction. Moham-medan and Hindu are no longer like our church and chapel, but are wolf and lamb lying down together. They have less trouble with their tongues of Marathi, Guzerati, Urdu than the University of Ireland has with Celtic. "But we have not yet solved the problem of moral instruction,"



one of the officials said to me: "We are still looking for suitable text-books!"

In politics they have revived the courts of the old village communities; they have separated the Executive from the Judiciary; representative Government has been carried as far as it has been in Germany. They are therefore face to face with financial problems. They have managed, however, to lower their land assessment, and if it is, nominally, not so low as under our rule, it is levied with less mechanical accuracy, and the financial officers contend that it presses less severely on the people. A kind of graduated income tax is in operation; and although there is no limitation upon the amount which may be borrowed on land, a form of the Homestead Law protects the cultivator from the money-lender, who would sell him up altogether. Fired with enthusiasm for the work of Mr. Charles Booth and Mr. Rowntree, and also determined to carry out in Baroda what he used to plead with us to do in our territories, Mr. R. C. Dutt, the Prime Minister, has just foreshadowed a scientific inquiry into the economic condition of the people with a view to making further alterations in the incidence of taxation.¹

To this, and much more of the same kind,

¹ He died, unfortunately, a few weeks after I saw him.



we listen in the cool hall of the State Guest House, where Ministers come to tell us of the dreams they are dreaming. As we follow these programmes, problems which come from the essence of things rise up in our minds. Is India to respond to this? Or will she, like a great giant disturbed by some troublesome creature, put her hand out and with a gentle tap annihilate it? That is *the* Indian problem so far as I can yet see.

As I was thinking it over they came to take us to the palaces. There are three of them glittering and shining all day in the sun. As you approach they rise above you in haughty strength, their marbles spurning you by their purity, their mosaics despising you for your lowliness and poverty. But the instant you cross their thresholds the hand of decay is outstretched to meet you. The West, meanly respectable, is fading and rotting in the Indian heat. The paint of pictures made in London and Paris studios has cracked, has softened, has run. The gilt on English frames has tarnished and chipped. The inlaid work of Shoreditch and Hackney has become parched like a clayfield in a dry season. The bats have desecrated the rooms; the straws of nests built in the sandal-wood joists have lodged in their



corners. Outside brazen bulls cast in Birmingham bellow at marble ladies fashioned by machinery, and they stand in groves and beds, and are fanned by breezes from lakes planned and made by gardeners from K. w. But again the sun of India slowly masters the will of man. Miles of hose pipes try to moisten the parched soil and cool the roots of the grass and the thousand flowers. Standing on the balconies of the Lakshmi Vilas Palace one can see the struggle going on as one can see the progress of a contest between wrestlers. And as one looks down upon the strife, one's eyes become blind to flowers and gardens and sun. One sees races and civilisations, man and nature, gripping each other, and the sphinx face of Destiny, who knows all but tells nothing, looking on.



II

AMONG THE RAJPUTS

NORTH from Baroda the country becomes a great grassy plain, very much like the South African veldt, particularly between the Modder River and Magersfontein. The men change. They become more jaunty in their carriage. They part their beards in the middle and comb back the sides to their ears. They carry ancient guns and old-world scimitars. When the sun sinks in the evening a thousand herds of cattle wander home over innumerable tracks converging on the villages. This is Rajputana, the home of proud warriors and brave women.

Baroda, with a smile, says, "I am modern"; Rajputana, with a haughty sniff, says, "I keep the old ways." Commerce and politics have both invaded parts of it; some of its chiefs hanker after English Philistinism. But these degeneracies are still exceptions.

The first Rajput chief I met, the well-known Sir Pratap Singh, of whom so many



romantic tales are told, was deploring the fact that the hand of age was upon him, that there was no chance of another war, and that the probability therefore was that he would have to die on a bed. Pax Britannica was nothing to him except an evidence that the Golden Age had passed. He was praying to be allowed to lead his polo team against Bengal politicians, and was promising to do the necessary damage with the handles of the clubs. It is he who is supposed to have said that within a few hours of the British withdrawal from India there would not be a rupee or a virgin left in Bengal—or something to that effect. He is a son in spirit of one of those famous Rajput heroes who, finding himself dying, sent to Lanza, prince of Multan, begging as a last favour "the gift of battle." When the prince agreed Rawal's "soul was rejoiced. He performed his ablutions, worshipped the gods, bestowed charity, and withdrew his thoughts from the world." Two or three days under the same roof as Sir Pratap made me understand the spirit of Chitor.

Whoever comes to India and does not sit down on the plain below Chitor with a history at his elbow and a plan on his lap, and then go up the hill—on an elephant if



possible—to the ruined temples, palaces, bazaars, tanks, and the still almost perfect towers, might as well have stayed at home: What man has read Tod's story of Chitor without feeling something of a hero himself? As a tale of the finest chivalry it should be in our school books. My friends are dinning it into my ears that there is no India. I do not know, but Chitor gives me something to go upon.

Round these walls tradition has woven most sacred garlands. Wending one's way up the long zigzag road, which is flanked all along by massive walls and spanned every now and again by a frowning gate, one may still imagine that he hears the tramp of the Rajput cavalry going out to die; and it is easy to imagine that the hum of voices and other sounds which comes down and goes up from the villages at the top and bottom of the hill, is the bridal song of the women going to their fearful death by fire in the cavern of the palace rather than become prisoners in the hands of the Moguls. The whole place is a vast temple of chivalry. Through these narrow lanes and over these ruined heaps one should go bare of head and foot. The sun set whilst we lingered there. Suddenly the land was filled with the beating of tom-toms; lights flickered from the



temples ; the hum of prayers rose on every hand ; queer forms moved in the gloom. The spell of the Mighty Past fell upon us.

At Chitor the past is dead, and only comes from its grave in the twilight. But not far off is the new capital of the State, Udaipur, the site of huts erected by the fugitive Pratap when pressed by Akbar. Here the Old Time still lives in the light of day.

The railway stops far out from the confines of Udaipur as an unclean thing stops at the threshold of a temple, and we had to drive for a mile or so to get to the city. Towering over the town are great white palaces and temple domes. The hills around are capped by palaces and forts and temples. Holy men wander unkempt, ash covered, almost naked, in its streets, or sit beneath its trees contemplating the Eternal and the all-comprehending Void.

Hardly had we arrived when we were told that a religious procession had started from the palace. The crowd came blowing horns, beating drums and cymbals, on foot, on horses, on elephants. The Maharana rode under a golden umbrella towards the rear. The rains were over, and the time had come when of old the chiefs gathered round their ruler and prepared to go out



with him to give battle. But before they went they had to propitiate the gods. Therefore a holy man came and sat for ten days in a temple without food or sleep holding a sword on his knees, and every evening before sunset the Maharana and his warriors went in state to do homage before him. They used to chant sacred songs and recite sacred verses on the way. That was the procession we saw. The sword of a famous ancestor had been sent from the palace the day before, and the Yogi sat with it in the temple as though the Pax Britannica had not been declared, and as though other sounds than those of reaping still followed the rains.

Next morning the Maharana sent for us. Inside the palace all was Oriental bustle. Camels, horses, fowls, peacocks, elephants wandered in the courtyards, the white walls of which flared in the sun. A perfect maze of moving humanity, from whining babes to the decrepit aged moved about. Suitors with their petitions sat at the doorways, soldiers paced up and down in the arches with swords on their thighs, scribes and courtiers lounged against pillars and stretched themselves on marble benches. Through endless passages, up innumerable stairs we were taken, and at length were



ushered into the presence of a small, keen-eyed, grey-bearded, dignified man. He toyed with a sword which lay across his knees, and explained that he had been busy with his devotions.

We were away back in the Middle Ages, in the presence of a man whose greatest boast was that no Muslim blood ever tainted his own, and that he had been true to the Rajput motto, "He who keeps the faith is preserved by God." He stood for the old ways, he told us. When he goes out into his domain 3,000 retainers follow him. He sacrifices every morning to his gods; he sits on his judgment-seat and hears the petitions of his people; he keeps his sword arm strong and crafty by hewing at clay images. Even his clocks decline to bow the knee to our noon, as his ancestors declined to accept the yoke of the Mogul—so he lives half an hour behind official time. I do not know to what enormities of heathendom I committed myself, but I said it was well that the old should not die. He smiled approvingly, murmured that some of his chiefs were not so faithful as himself, shifted his sword, held out his hand, and we returned through the courtiers, the soldiers, and the suitors into the noisy and the crowded courtyards below.



In the evening we sat on the verandah of the Guest House, up on a hill commanding wide views over mountain and plain and lake, watching the sun set and listening to an old man tell of Pratap, the foe of Akbar, and other Rajput heroes and Rajput battles. Youth returned and swelled in our veins. The glamour of chivalry enthralled us. But when the pinks and the yellows were deepening into night, the tales were broken by the crunching of horses' feet on the gravel. We were like sleepers roused from dreaming. After all, we were of the West, and in the garb of the West we had to go out and dine with the representative of the British Raj in this old-world State. I am afraid he thought us very dull. I was careering over the plains of Rajputana, living in times that are gone, and with men who have been but dust for centuries.



III

AT SIMLA

SIMLA is eight thousand feet above sea-level, and ten thousand miles above the heads of the people. The train up to these heights twists and doubles, snorts and puffs, rises and almost sticks; it pirouettes round corners and glides along the edges of precipices.

At first the journey is interesting. The mountains receive their visitor with regal splendour. They throw their arms about him; they envelop him in their mightiness; they soothe him and overwhelm him by their massive grandeur. But they pall as the hours go, and before Simla is reached the flesh has become weary and the eye tired, and it is a jaded and blasé wanderer who at length beholds the sacred snow-clad mountains from which the Ganges comes, and alights amongst the dwelling-places of those who are permitted to live on this Olympus.

They tell us that the railway journey, with the expectations of its start dying



away to the weariness of its finish, is an allegorical representation of the way which men have to walk from the day they pass into the service to that when Simla opens its gates to them, and that the Government of India defends the otherwise indefensible loss on this railway on the ground of its moral value. On this, as on other vital matters, the Annual Report on the Material and Moral Progress of the East Indies is silent.

So soon as the wanderer steps out of the train he knows he has come to a town unique amongst towns. Simla hangs on to the hill-tops by its eyebrows, and earthquakes try every now and again to shake it off. When earthquakes fail, the heavens open their doors and deluges fall to wash it away. But it sticks tight, like a cowboy on a bucking steed, and preserves its dignity. And who is to write of that dignity? It pervades Simla as the smell of cows pervades some Hindu temple. You have simply to sit down by the side of the road and feel it glide past. If it now and again merges into the ridiculous—well, that is always the flaw in the material of dignity.

The roads climb up hill-faces, and they are narrow and cannot be laid properly. Therefore only three households of the gods are allowed to drive upon them.



The rest of the dwellers must walk, or must be drawn by four men in rickshaws which look like dilapidated bath-chairs. Some of the more permanent sojourners have private establishments of bath-chairs. They have a staff of runners in uniform, and their ladies sally forth with these in the afternoon, and, arrayed in all the glories of the West, are pulled up hill and down dale—like proud mothers out for an airing after an interesting event. I have been told that only those who have been in Simla can imagine what the more delectable parts of heaven are like. I have also been told by poor, overworked, overworried, and overspending officials that that is the nonsense poured into the minds of innocent Europeans who know not the world. But I must write of what I saw, of how I felt—and of how, ultimately, I laughed and sorrowed.

Taken individually, the Indian official has more than the average amount of virtue. He is sensitive and introspective, for he suffers from fever and exile, and so his very virtues become a burden to him. He is honest, he worships efficiency, he is sensible of his high calling to rule equitably. He does his best in these respects, and he never spares himself in the doing of it. But his



path is through a jungle infested by troublesome beasts of prey. There is the House of Commons on the one hand, there are the educated, agitating natives on the other. Pursuing his way alone, as he has so often to do, through this weary land, his mind never shifts from his work, his thoughts never turn from his honesty. He takes few holidays, for he spends his cold weather in his district, and with the hot weather comes that maddest of all the mad doings of the English in India—he emigration of the chiefs of government to some hill station—and he goes up to meet the rest of the headmen of his caste and burn incense with them in their departmental temples, to attend religious dances, dinners, and receptions at the Viceregal abode, and to purify himself by writing reports and compiling statistics. This goes on for years without a break, except when he is in bed with fever, or when he runs home in a hurry with a broken-down wife or a child ready for exile. His Government pays handsomely for a daily supply to him of home news, which is both prejudiced and inaccurate, and appears to be designed to upset his nerves; and if his Government does not do him that service, his newspapers will do it for a copper a few hours later. Thus fate



is hard on him. Worried in India, told twice a day that the homeland is going to the dogs, how can the poor man keep morally fit?

Moreover, he feels that prestige is the bulwark of his rule. We do not rule India by the sword, but by our prestige. "The sahib is a man of power"; so says the Indian; and, adds the sahib himself, "Akbar, and not a Whitehall official, is the potentate upon whom I should model myself." Thus it happens that when a Member of the House of Commons puts questions about the sahib, the sahib resents it. He constructs theories about the questioning Member; the Anglo-Indian Press assists his imagination. So the sahib becomes more dignified, more introspective, more conscious of his own virtue, more reserved about questions in Parliament, less careful of his manners. He murmurs more devoutly about "prestige," that occult abracadabra which surrounds him with magical influences and which makes him sacred. He thus tends to become a thing apart, to become a Rajah who is convinced that his ancestor was a moon or a sun or other respectable deity. As a matter of simple and sober fact, he is only a good average Englishman, with remarkably little knowledge of the world



and of what is going on in it, with an honest, bluff sense of justice and a real desire to do his work well. He was put in an isolated post in India at too early an age perhaps; he had to pass examinations which did not really winnow the chaff from the wheat; he has to do his best to keep fit in a climate which does not give him a chance; his whole life, and especially his arrangement of work, are unnatural; he lives in an alien civilisation and has too defective an imagination to get into vital touch with it. These are his troubles. A little more sympathy with the West from which he came would help him in his trials; but as it is he is in India but not of it, of the West but not in it. All he can do, therefore, is to constitute the most clearly defined of all the castes in India, the ruling caste, and become a god sitting on an Olympus.

As such you see him in Simla, walking or riding with dignified helmet on his head and impressive cane in his hand—grave, upright, supermanly in aspect and demeanour. A stranger from Mars dropped on the top of this hill would certainly inquire, "Who are these kings? From what other world do they come?" And he would put his question in sober seriousness. For the Indian



official looks the part he has chosen for himself. Indeed, he is as near the perfect official, whose type is to be found in heaven, as any whom I have seen. As a matter of fact, if he would only read Radical papers exclusively for a year, so as to acquire some knowledge of Western politics, and confine his other reading for the same space of time to works of humour, so as to become a little thick-skinned, nobody on this earth would be like him. I have met some such. No place where I have been is without them altogether. They are the salt of the service, and if Lord Morley could only discover them (he has put his finger on one or two already), the British Raj could laugh at sedition, and the British citizen would need to have no qualms about the government of India.

But a great impediment has been put recently in the way of the salvation of the mass. Some time ago a poet came to their aid, and wrote "Pagett, M.P." The System in Simla sighed with satisfaction. It fashioned the rhyme into breastplates and helmets, words and spears, greaves and gyves. "Morning Prayers," the "Manual of Deportment," "How to Approach an A.D.C.," Reuter's telegrams, *The Pioneer*, were all put into the background as things of offence, defence, and consolation. The



inquirer who comes to India and who asks about the extravagant waste of money on public undertakings, from railways to Simla roads, about the whacking of natives, about the mystery of the rickshaw, about the bribery that is honeycombing the lower strata of the public service, gets some information politely, but "the man who knows" is sad at heart. He is certain that the poor stranger does not understand, that he will not have the intelligence to steer clear of educated natives, that he will not be able to appreciate the Indian truth. He is a fish out of his moral water. And so, whilst the System explains and defends its absurdities to you, it also seems to say, "But excuse me, my dear innocent. You must remember you can never understand the occult, which is the truth upon which I am based. Let me get up on my pinnacle and recite a little wise poetry to you." Up it goes and begins :

Pagett, M.P., was a liar, and affluent liar therewith—
He spoke of the heat of India. . . .

And you feel very humble and very angry—and the gulf between you and the System widens. If you are a profane man you swear ; if a passive Christian, you walk sorrowfully away ; if an ordinary person with common sense, you laugh boisterously.



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CSL

IV

THE KHYBER AND THE PATHAN

THE Pathan is a Mohammedan who lives in the hills between India and Afghanistan, and is a delightful fellow. He has no bows and salaams. He looks you in the face as one gentleman looks another, and is as interested in you as you are in him. His smile is perfect; his face is as handsome as a woman's. The fact that he is likely to be shot one day by a neighbour from behind a boulder seems to raise his thoughts above the mundane affairs of life, and he swaggers along prepared to take pot-luck when it comes. He holds life at a low fee; he is a humorist. There has been nobody like him since the peace between England and Scotland was cemented, and the Borderer and the Highlander both bade the world adieu in consequence. Even the blindest Anglo-Indian cannot despise him. He is a man and a brother amongst white men.

I have not been able to make up my mind whether the following story, which seems



to be quite authentic, shows the humorist, the religious fanatic, the grasping man of thrift, or the ready taker of human life. Perhaps it shows a mingling of all those qualities, and there is no good Pathan without them. A Mullah appeared one day in a village and proceeded to make his claims upon its temporalities. The levy he imposed was held to be heavy, and he explained to the villagers that it had to be so on account of their own religious shortcomings, shown by the fact that no tomb of a holy man was within their borders. The villagers grumbled, retired to consider the claim, and presently returned. "It is quite true," announced their headman, "that this village possesses no holy man's tomb and that we deserve your frowns. That has long been a cause of sorrow to ourselves. We have therefore decided to end this undesirable state of things at once lest mischief befall us. You yourself have great fame for holiness, and you will now die and your tomb will be in our midst." No wandering Mullah now condemns that village, for there is a tomb in it which glares with whitewash during the day and which shines in the light of glimmering lamps at night. The holiness of the village is envied by its neighbours, and its people now find it easier



to bow in daily prayer to the One God whose Prophet was Mohammed.

• In the modern world the Pathan is a trafficker. He jobs horses and lends money. That shows a wonderful faculty for accommodating the inner light to the outer darkness. For the Pathan is forbidden by his Koran to take usury, and at home he generally follows the Koran in this respect. Hence there has been trouble in establishing agricultural banks in some parts of the North-West where they are most required. But he is proving too clever for the Koran. He appoints agents, through whom he receives his gains, and sometimes making a bold and a short cut of it, he becomes a Modernist in this respect, holds the economics of Mohammed to be antiquated, and, without a qualm of conscience, lends a rupee in the morning, calls for it in the evening, and pockets it with an anna in addition. In the capacity of money-lender he is drifting southwards and eastwards. Whether he will ever rank with the Hindu in this respect remains to be seen. He has only begun the job; but his love of filthy lucre and his habits of thrift will carry him far.

He believes in rifles, and despises bombs. For the same reason he holds the Babu in contempt. He dearly loves a raid, and if



caught red-handed he dies like a man. He has no affection for us, but he holds us in great respect. During one of our recent campaigns on the frontier a Pathan company was blazing away at the enemy from the ancient rifles with which we have armed them, and with old-fashioned gunpowder. An English regiment with which the company was co-operating, assuming that whoever used black powder was the heathen, poured into their colleagues a hail of bullets. "This is too bad," remarked a Pathan to his officer. "We do not mind fighting the English if that is the game, but both the English and the others—that is not fair." That is the Pathan all over.

Four of them were sent out with us as an escort one day, and we fell a-talking. They told me of one of their comrades-in-arms who went to his village on a week-end leave of absence. During the two days he was away he had stormed and blown up a fort erected by one with whom he had a feud, killed two men, and burned a village. He turned up at the beginning of the week as though nothing had happened; and as the scene of the exploit was outside the British sphere of occupation, he made no secret of his Saturday and Sunday employment. I asked one of them if he was the proud



possessor of a blood feud. "No," he replied, "I live too near to the British border." But he looked more like a child who has been asked if it has a sixpence, and in replying that it has not, indicates: "But would I not like to have one?"

To get into the Pathan's mind one has to go up into the mountains of the frontier, where he lives. There every village is a fort. Strong mud walls surround it, and a citadel rises up in its midst. If it is in the neighbourhood of a stream or a neutral road, like the Khyber, there will likely be a trench dug down to the stream or the road for purposes of protection. In some cases the trench may be a tunnel for extra safety. Over the villages tower the hills, bare rocks glittering in the sun and fiercely hot like ovens. On little plateaux or at the bottom of river beds small fields of maize and other grain may be seen, and on the bare mountain sides or in the dusty channels that are watercourses during the rains, the village flocks of goats find something to eat.

The domestic side of the Pathan is seen in the Khyber. The Khyber road itself is sacred against him. He can walk on it, but he may not fight on it. If he meet his enemy there, both are in sanctuary and greet each other like Christians. A murder on this road is



an offence against the British Government, and would be punished. Thus, law and order runs in a channel through the country towards Cabul.

True, the law and order still needs the support of the rifle, but not so much as it used to do. On Tuesdays and Fridays the British Government sends an escort of troops up the Pass to protect caravans going between India and Afghanistan, and a special force called the Khyber Rifles has been enrolled for this purpose. Therefore, on those days, and on special occasions when necessary, a cavalcade starts from the Jamrud Fort, on the Indian side of the Pass. Hundreds of camels and scores of donkeys and buffaloes, laden with everything, from grand pianos to scrap-iron, fall into line. The march to Cabul begins. The dusty, red road ascends and becomes steely grey in colour. The mountains close in. With rifles slung across their backs, the hillmen appear tending their flocks, or whacking their donkeys, or wandering aimlessly about, thinking perhaps of the good old times when caravans gave sport and an ampler living. Silhouetted against the sky on every hill-top two or three guards are seen keeping watch, and forts are frequently passed. As the road winds in its ascent, magnificent



views of the great Indus Plain open out below, with Peshawar in the far distance.

But they say that the escorts now are but ceremonies in which the realities of past times survive. We went through with four men ; whereas, we were told by one of them, a hundred would not have been sufficient a few years ago. And yet one never knows what the future has in store for the Pathan. I doubt if we have heard the last of these Dugald Dalgettys of the border. Gun-running from Muscat has become a great trade—we were told of one tribal family that was trying to raise enough wind to buy a cannon ; and the hillmen are better armed than our own native levies. It is said that the tribes are getting restive in parts, and I have been told tales—most of them probably baseless—of religious societies and Mullahs whispering dangerous things in the ears of the Devout.

Of this, however, we may be certain. The Pathan is not in the least afraid of us. He is prepared to play at targets with us or with anybody else if the spirit moves him. And the spirit can easily move him. The frontier is still the seat of mysterious religious and political movements. It is said that he has been following with much headshaking recent events in Turkey, for, unlike the younger Mohammedans of the



plains below, he has his doubts about recent events in the world of Islam. Moreover, we have driven him up into the hills and have confined him too much. Life becomes harder for him; time now flows slowly and inertly through his sand-glass. The call to action would find him quite willing, and he would have no thought of what the consequences would be. It would be the will of the Lord. It would be the fate of man. It would be the event foreordained since the beginning of the world. And the Pathan for a few brief weeks would take his rifle off his back, and the hills would echo and re-echo the crack of guns and the cries of fighting-men. The Pathan would be enjoying himself.



V

AT LAHORE

THE first thing which one learns in India is to take it in bits. The political movements in Bengal, Bombay, and the Punjab present differences of method and outlook which must influence conclusions about Indian nationalism.

Lahore is the capital of the Punjab, and the centre of its political activities. Here one meets amongst leaders Lajpat Rai, and amongst organisations the Arya Somaj. Moreover, as in the Punjab, the Hindu and the Mohammedan practically balance each other, it is in the Punjab that one can best understand the difficulties which must beset a Nationalist movement in India. When one has gone round the Arya Somaj school and college in the morning, under the guidance of the Somaj leaders, interviewed the reception committee of the Indian National Congress in the afternoon, dined with the Moslem League in the evening, and filled in the interstices



with interviews with British officials, one begins to understand the intricacy of Lahore—that is, Punjab—politics.

The centre and source of Punjab activities are in the Arya Somaj, and its propaganda must be first of all understood. The Somaj was founded in Bombay in 1872, but it never took root there, nor did it succeed in Bengal or Madras. The Punjab, with its religious conflicts, its religious austerities, and its puritanical type of mind, gave it a welcome and became its home. The United Provinces are also congenial to it, and contain some 400 of its branches.

By the Anglo-Indian officials the Somaj is regarded as a political body—as a society which has some occult creed and pursues its wicked way under cloaks of deceit. Commissioners and deputy commissioners, district magistrates, collectors, and policemen regard the Somaj as a seditious organisation, and indictments have been known to be made against men solely on the ground that they belonged to this society,¹ and they have been bound over to keep the peace because they were found preaching its doctrines. The Society has therefore come

¹ A common item in indictments for sedition is that the accused is a member of the Arya Somaj. The recent Patiala sedition case was a gross example of this.



to consider itself persecuted; it is glorying in the fact; it records its tribulations with flourishes of trumpets in every issue of its official organ; it appeals for support for its members when they are arrested—and the Punjab officials play in the most innocent way into its hands.

The Arya Somaj is purely a religious society, and was founded to carry on the teachings of Swami Dayanand Sarasvati, one of the many holy men who arise in the course of a generation in Hindu religious life. Born in 1824, the Swami died in 1883. Stated in a sentence, his teaching was directed towards bringing Hindu religion back to the purity of the Vedas. The worship of idols had deteriorated the Hindu and had led to all manner of social evils. God alone should be revered; the rule of caste should be broken; early marriages should be ended; education in accordance with classical Hindu methods should be given to the people. In this there was nothing new. The Arya Somaj holds some of its most characteristic tenets in common with the Brahmo Somaj—that product of Western culture and religious liberalism. And yet it hates the Brahmo. The Arya Somaj began from below with dogmas; the Brahmo Somaj from above with catholicity. The



one is aggressively Hindu; the other is as generously eclectic. The Arya Somaj is one part of that characteristic revival of the ancient ways which is going on in India to-day. It dreams of a world-dominion for the Vedas.

But the Swami inculcated a spirit as well as a doctrine. Part of his revelation was that the Aryan was the chosen people, the Vedas the chosen gospel, India the chosen land. His language was not always polite; his manner was often provocative. He was a limb of the Church militant.¹ Austere, independent, dogmatic, and puritanical was his character, and he imparted those qualities to his followers. You meet them, therefore, to-day in Lahore, their capital city, dour and determined, ready to sacrifice and be sacrificed, propagandists of an accomplished order. They are indeed the Puritans of Hinduism—and it is well for us to remember that Puritanism became political only under an intolerable Government. The Aryas are opposed to the Mohammedans; they are opposed to the Christians; they attack both. They ask no

¹ The best account of the Swami and his work is "An English Translation of Satyarth Prakash" (Virajanand Press, Lahore), 1908. The book is also a most characteristic production of the Hindu mind.



favours from the Government, they do not hang about the verandahs of commissioners. Their one thought is to convert India to their views.

With this main purpose in mind, they have studied the methods of other propagandists. What have the Christians done? Established schools and orphanages.¹ The Arya Somaj determined to do the same. What has the Government done? Established famine relief schemes, promoted education, and so on. The Somaj promotes famine and other charitable relief, and is working out its own educational theories. Its schools are excellent, and its members have been special friends of female education. But its greatest asset is the spirit of its members. It is not always lovely and attractive. It is perhaps hard and bigoted. But it is self-sacrificing, and when embodied in such men as Lala Hans Raj, the ascetic Principal

¹ The members started relief for children left destitute by the famine of 1896-7. They then brought 250 Hindu children into five orphanages. The bad times of 1899 made them renew their efforts. This is a significant sentence from the Report of the Lahore Society for the period between October 1899 and November 1900. It refers to "that premier nobleman of Jodhpur," and describes him: "absorbed as he was in the work of administration in general, he could not do much in the way of checking the tide of missionary enterprise in the matter of orphan relief."

of the Arya College, it flinches at no obstacle. It has split over meat-eating, and the degree of austerity to be observed in the education of youth.

Now, this is exactly the kind of movement which the ordinary British official in India cannot understand. He suspects it. It seems a menace to him. He reads all sorts of occult meaning into its teachings and its actions. Hated by the Mohammedans and the Christians alike, the Anglo-Indian calls it seditious and persecutes its members. It thus is enabled to pose before the people as the body specially selected by the governing authority for punishment, with the result that the wrath of magistrates does it more good than the excellence of its own propaganda.

As illustrations of the bogey character of the Somaj, I may cite two things. I was told by a British official that in a hidden corner of the grounds of the Arya College there was a place where the students were taught wrestling—in view of eventualities—but that I would not be shown that. When we were walking round the grounds, accompanied by the Arya Somaj Committee, a sand-patch, which I had not noticed to be of any importance, was pointed out to me. They laughed merrily. ‘This,’ the



chairman said, "is where we secretly teach our seditious students to wrestle!" It was nothing but what one sees in nearly every village, for wrestling is a very old Indian sport. If, for instance, the tourist who finds his way to the show city of Fatepur Sikri will turn down to the left from the Akbar entrance-gate to where the hand carpet-weavers work, he will find a little square of well-trodden sand where the youths keep up this exercise.

The second matter is regarding the Gurukul. This is a school which a section of the Somaj started to revive Indian education on the most extreme traditional lines. The pupils are taught the virtues and practices of an asceticism which few in India practise to-day. Next year, when the first batch of boys leaves, I was told that yellow-robed sedition-mongers would be available to roam over the country, nominally as Somaj propagandists. When I obtained the real facts, they were that two brothers alone leave next year, and that the present intention of their parents is to send them to England. I refer to these two things, not merely because they are whispered about here in India, but because they have figured in Indian controversies at home.

In brief: the Arya Somaj is a religious



organisation, Indian in its inspiration, Punjabi in its characteristics. It proclaims one God; it is at war with superstition; it is winning back to Hinduism men who had been converted to Mohammedanism and Christianity. It also opposes the quiescent modes of worship, and imposes the test of conduct upon its professed followers. "Learn to live as you would wish to die," is one of the texts hanging in the Council Chamber of its college at Lahore. Another is "Victory from within or a mighty death without."

If the Government would only let it alone it would soon reach its proper place in Indian life. At present the Government is endowing it with fictitious power by persecuting its members.



VI

PUNJAB CAMPS

BENGAL gives life to Indian nationalism but the Punjab supplies it with its problems. To begin with, the Punjab is "dour," and the Punjabi has been described as the Scotsman of India. A revival in Hindu religion there means an uprising of Puritanism, whilst in Bengal it produces something akin to a Catholic movement. It was because Swami Dayanand, the founder of the Arya Somaj, was a rough Philistine like Luther that his society has flourished in the Indus valley.

There is a good deal of the West about the Punjabi. But he is an Indian. He will have no importations either of politics or of faith. If he throws the priesthood of the Brahmins to the four winds, he does not create as his justification a new eclectic faith like that of the Brahmo Somaj; he goes back to his own scriptures with the same fidelity as the scientific Christian returns to his creeds. When he found his faith

anew, moreover, the Punjabi was not content to say, "This is for the salvation of India," but "This being for the salvation of India must also be for the salvation of the world."

Now, if the political stage of the Punjab were occupied by this "dour" man and the British official alone, things would be lively. But the situation is not so simple as that. The Punjab is the Ulster of India, for in it there is a Mohammedan community somewhat greater in numbers than the Hindu community, and the Mohammedans have pitched a political camp of their own, where their own flags fly and their own drums beat. The difference between the two is soon discovered; but if you try to find it in a programme you will be baffled, for the Mohammedan as a representative on a Council will back practically everything which his Hindu colleague will propose.

But the Indian Mohammedan is not a Nationalist—at present. He speaks of "my community," not of "India." He thinks of religious associations, not of political ones. Above all, he distrusts the Hindu. He knows that he has neglected opportunities of education which the Hindu has embraced, that he has been careless of his well-being when the Hindu has been nurturing his own.



He is like a man who feels that he is surrounded by a network of impalpable powers working for his ill, and that he cannot sleep lest they should undo him. To the Punjab Mohammedan, Hinduism in public life is a Freemasonry. Wherever a Hindu goes he leaves a breach open for a stream of Hinduism to follow. The Mohammedan regards the Hindu as some suffragettes regard man.

This is the present frame of mind of the Mohammedan. He feels he must have a camp of his own, a party to look after him, and, above all, that his community must be regarded as a separate political entity and be represented as such on all legislative councils. Then, and then only, he says, will he be safe.

In addition to these things, he talks of his greater loyalty, of the impossibility of Indian self-government on paper; but I smile at that. In the Mohammedan camp there is a store of spare arms for show, and his acute leaders naturally show them. These arguments belong to that store. They are only brought out for effect, though some of our officials think otherwise. The camp and everything in it is brand-new.

Before exploring the Hindu camp I must say something about the part which the



Government plays. It is generally conceded in India that the most incompetent of the Governments is that of the Punjab. It takes its stand upon two foundation rocks, "Prestige" and "Sedition," the meaning of the former being that it can do what it likes, and of the latter that if any Indian questions its doings, his house will be raided and he will be deported. The very dangerous condition of the province in 1907, when the Sikh regiments became restive and riots broke out in the Rawal Pindi district, arose mainly from blundering but well-meaning acts of the Government, which, had it been in touch with the people, would never have proposed its Colonisation Bill in the form in which it was drafted, and would have seen that the increased land assessments required delicate and not autocratic handling.

When the storm burst upon it, it shrieked "Sedition." There was a man of the name of Lajpat Rai active in politics at the time. He was a member of the Arya Somaj, he was a good speaker, he was a "Congress wallah." He was marked for deportation, yet at no time had the Government a scrap of evidence against him, except that he was opposing its Colonisation Bill and holding political meetings. The result was that Lajpat Rai had to be liberated, and from



being a propagandist he found he had become a leader. He is soured, quite naturally, and even to-day he cannot take a ticket from Lahore without some detective finding out where he is going and without some one molesting him on the way to show his ticket—a thing which never happens to the ordinary passenger on Indian railways.

In the frankest possible manner the Punjab Government announces from the house-tops that every Arya is an anarchist and every critic a seditious person.¹ It has no notion of statesmanlike handling, no idea of political methods. The man in power simply uses his power, whether it is in the form of a not too honest detective department, or a not too discriminating executive and judiciary. Put it as nicely as one may, the best that can be said is that the Government of the Punjab and the Hindus are like two very estimable people with incompatible temperaments who have unfortunately married each other.

¹ In connection with the Patiala Sedition Case (1910), when officials of the State of Patiala were tried for sedition because they were members of the Arya Somaj, some correspondence passed between the President of the Somaj and the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, and the letter which the latter wrote, grudgingly admitting that the society might not be so bad as it was painted, left no doubt as to the real opinion of the Government.

We now can understand the Hindu camp. It is angry with the Mohammedans, suspicious of the Government, and unhappy with itself. It breathes nationalism. Its prayers, its gods, everything it holds dear are nationalist. But the Mohammedan as a believer and as a politician thwarts it. It used to be the only camp, all outside being a crowd. That is true no longer. At the door where the office-seeker enters the Mohammedan now stands petitioning, arguing, threatening, bagging the crumbs thrown at him, and asserting claims for much more. When the Government gives him something, the Hindu sees favouritism in the act, and he has just presented a long petition of his grievances in this respect. Above all, the Councils Act has come, and the Mohammedan has received preferential treatment. The flags are flying over the Mohammedan camp; not a square inch of bunting flies over the Hindu's head.

His past political idol, the National Congress, degraded before his eyes, every avenue of constitutional agitation blocked, every step he takes marked by spies, what can he do? He has first of all come to the conclusion that a united India is yet impossible. He has therefore ceased to think of a "National" Congress, and has started a "Hindu" one. It is tentative as yet, but



any one with an eye to observe can see the drift of things. Nationalism is splitting up into racialism and religious sectarianism; and those who think that an improvement are welcome to their opinion. The Punjabi has ceased to believe in the old Moderate leaders, and, in spirit, is joining with the Extremists—not the anarchists. He is, therefore, departing from his old political paths and is striking out into new ones apart from Government roads. He is to practise self-help, even in social things. He is to do his own education and his own charity; he is to wear his own clothes and patronise only the products of his own people. From voluntary associations of the faithful and patriotic the New India is to be born. He is building up a Hindu Sinn Fein.



VII

AT BENARES

To the east a tawny band of light spans the horizon ; overhead the pale, pure crescent of an old moon lies like a piece of delicate jewellery on dark blue velvet ; behind to the west the stars are still shining.

It is half an hour from sunrise, and I am hurrying to the Ganges. The lanes of Benares, from which offensive smells arise as incense, are just beginning to bestir themselves. A woman sweeps at her door ; a figure that has been sleeping in a corner wakes up ; a man fans a newly lit fire. The tawny light is warming to pink, and mists begin to rise from the dewy ground.

Suddenly there is an end to the road, and the Ganges flows at our feet. To the left the river comes down in a magnificent bend, the banks on the outer curve being high. There stands Benares—steps, temples, palaces, rising in sweeping terraces from the water, the two tall minarets of Aurangzebe's mosque forming the crowning point of all.



What menace is there in this incongruous survival here of the work of the bigoted Mohammedan ? What shadow of the future does it throw over the holiest ground of Hinduism ?

There is a murmur on the shore ; there is a confused movement ; there is a sigh as if a waiting people have seen the sign of deliverance. A hot flame of fire has risen above the horizon. Prayers are murmured by thousands of lips ; thousands of feet obey the impulse to go forward into the water ; thousands of dark bodies are bowing in humiliation and adoration, vanishing from sight below the river, rising dripping to add to the murmur of prayer which goes out in a confused hum to welcome the sun.

The sun glistens on the little brazen drinking-pots which the people have brought down to cleanse, and lights up the many-coloured robes of the worshippers. White predominates. It glares and challenges everything with its purity. But there are also patches of green and red, purple and pink, saffron and yellow ; and they move and mix like a kaleidoscopic mass of ever-changing pattern. The eye becomes bewildered ; the mind grasps only mass and motion. Slowly the stream drifts the boat down, but the scene becomes more and more



a dream, a symbol, a moment in the eternal pursuit of the Infinite. The murmur seems to come far down Time. The crowds holding up hands in adoration and bowing their heads low in supplication are but representations of what has gone on through the ages. The clanging of bells in the temples, the haunting notes of the reeds played beside the shrines are but the jarring notes which man always strikes when, in his moods of self-consciousness, he brings sacrifices to his gods.

So we drift downwards past places varying in their degrees of sacredness, past stairs which rise upwards in uninterrupted flights and others which are broken by shrines, by masses of bamboo rods bearing wicker-work baskets at their tips, by platforms where wise and holy men teach novices the way of life, and in the end we come to where the poor Hindu body seeks rest at last. All day long thin blue columns of smoke rise from this ghat; all day long they seem to be building piles of wood there; all day long processions come bearing gaily decorated burdens on their shoulders. The bodies wrapped up in white, or pink, or yellow cloth, lie with their feet in the water waiting for the pyre. You see them in rows lying thus. And the smoke rises lazily and heavily, and is blown across the bathers.



You hear the crackling of the consuming fire. No one heeds. "All die," they say, "in due time," and blessed are those whose ashes mingle with the muddy waters of the Ganges. So this strange medley of colours, this confusion of peoples and tongues, this mingling of the sublime and the sordid, of life and death so characteristic of India, this cry for Infinite Peace, go on through the years.

The sun is far up. Bells are tinkling in the temples, and the hum of chanted prayers falls upon the waters. We go up from the river to the town—to the Holy City—to the Rome of India. But who can describe the life of its narrow lanes? Who can penetrate their mysteries of devotion and deceit, of holiness and blackguardliness? The temples are full. Incessant streams of people pass and repass their doorways. The heathen can but peep in, and he sees nothing but brown skins crowding round repulsive idols, throwing flowers at them, sprinkling them with water, bowing before them.

Sacred monkeys chatter from innumerable perches, sacred cows wander round court-yards, sacred men take toll at every point of vantage. Every foot of the road is lined with beggars—beggars suffering from every loathsome disease and every sickening con-

tortion under the sun. Their howls, their whines, their importunities make you feel you are treading the corridors which lead to the places where the lost are in torment.

All is confusion; nothing rests for a moment; it is an endless stream, a ceaseless murmur, a never-slackening crowd. The air is heavy with the scent of flowers and the stench of cattle, and is hot and sickening with humanity. A priest hangs garlands round your neck, and they seem heavy as iron chains, and their odours make mists in your eyes. You must get away from the stifling place.

Out in the courtyard where the air circulates more freely, and where the clang of the temple bell sounds remote, one can stand and watch. In one corner is a fakir in an iron cage, and a group of weary and worn women are taking counsel of him. Poor old things, their wizened breasts, their sunken eyes, their decrepit attitude, tell how unmercifully life has laid burdens on their backs. Nearer is the "Well of Knowledge," round the railings of which a crowd always lingers. Across the pavement wanders an array of queer creatures, wild and unkempt, covered with ashes and little else. Standing there, one begins to grasp the spirit of Benares. One drifts in the



muddy, troubled stream of men seeking for that peace which passeth understanding — of men who at one moment are soaring high in the clear blue of religious thought, and in the next are wallowing in the filthy mud of idolatrous ceremony.

That is India all over. It tolerates everything. It looks upon human frailty with the kindest of eyes. Its moments of purifying devotion obliterate its years of debasing exercises. Moreover, it cleanses itself with its humour. It does not believe its own extravagances. It comes to love its gods as one loves a family heirloom. We saw the feast of maternity when the mother goddess, after having dwelt in houses for some days, is borne with bands in procession to be thrown into the Ganges. When she goes, we were told, the hearts of the women are empty as when a child dies. They crowd the doorways and balconies to see her taken away, and they weep at her going.

“And is it all real?” I asked. “Yes and no” was the reply of an English friend who has lived long amongst the people. “The mother has twined herself round my own heart. She was very ugly when I saw her first, but I now think her beautiful. India knows, and yet she does not know. She is content to worship.” She follows her



quest for the Eternal—of whom the things of life are but the shadow and the thought—through the most sordid paths, through nauseating filth and appalling error, and yet upon her shrines, in an extraordinary degree, shines the light of pure devotion and absolute abandonment.

Truly, Benares, the Holy City, holds in its keeping the soul of India.



VIII

THE GENIUS OF BENGAL

ON the outskirts, tall chimneys belch out black smoke; the river is crowded with craft; the streets are choked with traffic. Proud men come with figures of prosperity to lay before you, with plans of dock extension to explain to you, with projects of improvements with which to entice you. This is a new world. I keep asking myself constantly: "Am I still in India?" The impact of impressions both on mind and eye is of a new kind. I am breathing a new atmosphere. Here there is life and aggressive effort. This is Bengal.

From the moment I set foot in India the winds have been whispering to me "Beware of the Babu! Beware of Bengal!" And here I am passing under the spell of both.

The Babu is very irritating to the British official. For the Babu is clever, he has absorbed Western knowledge, he is discontented as a degraded subordinate, and he is consequently impertinent at times.



He is said to be corrupt, to have no sense of honour, to be a coward. He has inherited the wrath of Macaulay. The gulf between the Babu and the Britisher in Calcutta is deep and wide, and officials of great experience told us it was not being filled up. I do not think it is likely to be, and the reason is not far to seek.

The Bengali inspires the Indian nationalist movement. In Bombay, the nationalist is a Liberal politician, a reformer who takes what he can get and makes the best use of it. In the Punjab, he is a dour unimaginative individual who shows a tendency to work in a lonely furrow. In Bengal, he is a person of lively imagination who thinks of *India* and whose nationalism finds expression not only in politics but in every form of activity. Consequently, Bengal politics are too volatile, too philosophical, too nervous. There are no good political leaders there. There are excellent speakers and eloquent writers, but none of the prominent men seem to have that heaven-given capacity to lead. They can prepare men to be led, but no shepherd then steps forward to pipe the flocks to the green pastures. If Bengal could unite leaders and agitators the system of our rule in India would change as by magic.



But Bengal is perhaps doing better than making political parties. It is idealising India. It is translating nationalism into religion, into music and poetry, into painting and literature. I called on one whose name is on every lip as a wild extremist who toys with bombs and across whose path the shadow of the hangman falls. He sat under a printed text, "I will go on in the strength of the Lord God"; he talked of the things which trouble the soul of man; he wandered aimlessly into the dim regions of aspiration where the mind finds a soothing resting-place. He was far more of a mystic than of a politician. He saw India seated on a temple throne. But how it was to arise, what the next step was to be, what the morrow of independence was to bring—to these things he had given little thought. They were not of the nature of his genius.

Another whom I visited in an old crumbling place of many rooms where a joint family dwelt in ancient style began by blessing me in the name of his gods, by telling me about his brother who had withdrawn from the world and who is in sorrow because the plaintive voice of India *will* intrude upon his meditations, and by informing me about their common family worship. I asked for books and pamphlets published by him,



and he brought me the lives of saints and meditations on the Infinite. He told me that he longed to leave the things that are seen and distract, and plunge into that ocean of contemplation where men here seek to find oblivion. He edits one of the most detested Bengal papers. From Bengal gush innumerable freshets of religions all going to revive and invigorate the nationalist spirit.

A literary revival makes for the same end. It is still crude, particularly in its romance, but it is groping after Hindu realism. It is written in Bengali in the same aggressive way that some of our Irish friends are trying to revive the use of Erse. It is not so good as the Bengali literature of last generation, when Bankim Chandra Chatterji was writing his *Anandamath* and Taraknath Ganguli his *Svarnalata*. But its intention and spirit are quite clear.

So also in music, poetry and the fine arts. The last, glowing with nationalist spirit, has been revived by Tagore and some of his pupils. Music and poetry already enjoy a vigorous popular life. They brought us out on the river on Sunday and sang to us—"Bande Mataram" amongst other things. Their "Marseillaise" and their "Carmagnole" are hymns thanking God for endowing life with beauty, are invocations to India their Mother



full of yearning endearments. They sang from well-thumbed copies of a collection of hymns written by Tagore the poet, and the music, much of it new and all so unlike our own, clung round our hearts and stole again and again all that day into our ears.

When we were still in the North-West we were told of this incident. A concert was held one evening at one of the orphan schools controlled by a Missionary Society, the boys themselves doing the entertaining. The Punjabis sang their rather monotonous and rather common popular songs, but one lad singing in an unknown tongue swept every one off his legs by the vim of his style and the enchantment of his music. He had been picked up on the Calcutta streets and he was singing some of the Bengali national hymns.

That is what Bengal is doing for the national movement. It is creating India by song and worship, it is clothing her in queenly garments. Its politics must be for some time an uncertain mingling of extremist impossibilism and moderate opportunism—of religious yearning and artistic idealism. Bengal will be romantic while the Punjab is dogmatic and Bombay diplomatic. Whether it be true or not, it is a most likely thing that the political dacoits of Bengal took



their inspiration and guidance from the *Anandamath* with its heroic *Children* lodging in dark woods and marshalled to fight by monkish warriors. That is so like Bengal and the Bengali. Bengal will nurture for long the bereavement to its heart caused by the Partition; it will cling fondly to Swadeshi; on the shores of its enthusiasm it will throw up the bomb-thrower as a troubled sea throws up foam, and from it all will come India—if India ever does come.

I sat at the table of the great official, and in bad temper and rude manner he demanded of me to tell him where I had been, whom I had seen, and of what I was thinking. I told him of the hymns and the pictures and the prayers. And he laughed a great rude Western laugh and explained everything in blind positive Western superficialities. He knew nothing about the pictures; the hymns were a mixture of double meaning and sedition; he had no inner appreciation of the prayers. Each sentence ended with the authoritative *I know*. But I had heard the children sing and the women talk, and the men join in with both. And I think I know.



IX

THE WOMEN OF INDIA¹

A NOTEWORTHY feature of the political situation in India is that the British are aliens, with different ideals, different thoughts, different customs from those over whom they rule. When the officials told me, as they were very fond of doing, that no one could really know anything about the country after a stay of a few weeks, I used to agree with them most sincerely, and then ask whether they considered that they with their longer experience knew anything really about the two dominant influences in the life of the Indians—their religion and their womenfolk.

No doubt some Englishmen, especially Max Müller who had never been to India, have gained fuller knowledge of the history and the varieties of religious beliefs in India than any of the Indians themselves have. But did Max Müller, does any English

¹ This chapter and the next are written by my wife, who was able to get interesting peeps at the life of the women.



student, understand the way in which the worship of a particular god or goddess, or the holding of a particular philosophical belief, affects the daily life of the Hindus? Can a Western enter into the soul of an Oriental and share his religious susceptibilities?

With regard to the women, even superficial knowledge is impossible to the British person of the male sex, for the orthodox Hindu or Mohammedan lady who is above the coolie rank keeps herself secluded from the outside world, and no Englishman can meet her or speak to her face to face. Yet I think it is no exaggeration to say that religion and marriage, the two sides of life in which such a gulf is fixed between West and East, have even more absorbing and universal influence upon the lives of the Indians than upon those of our own people at home.

Whilst impossible for the English man, it is very difficult for the English woman to enter into the lives of her sisters behind the Purdah, or veil. One need not be a suffragette to find it hard to imagine living through year after year of seclusion in a zenana, seeing no sights beyond the walls of one's own apartments or garden, meeting no male person except the men of one's immediate



household (sometimes even older brothers-in-law are excluded). But this is the fate of many women who nevertheless are powers in the land and who deserve the title of "strong-minded" ladies.

In the most old-fashioned of all the Native States of India, that of Udaipur, the Maharani is invisible to ladies of English tongue. Her name can never be mentioned in conversation with her husband or her son; it would be an insult to ask them directly after her health. There is a story that once, when she had a bad ear, she allowed an English lady doctor to examine the ear alone, which was put through a hole in a screening veil. But sometimes when the Maharana has seemed to be persuaded to some improvement in his rule, a deadlock suddenly arises. He will not move any further in the desired direction, and gives no reason for his change, but his British advisers suspect—they cannot know—that the Maharani has put her foot down and that she is the obstacle, an obstacle hopeless for them to reach.

In how many other cases may it not be the woman's influence which baffles our officials and turns their plans to naught—an influence of which they are necessarily ignorant and which is correspondingly strong and subtle?



There are well-known instances in India of women who have ruled in their own right, and done it with sagacity and success. We stood in the old fort at Jhansi, and saw where the Rani had concentrated her forces at the time of the Mutiny, where she had defied us and made a mock of our power, and where finally she had been driven out to die fighting against us in the hills. It was only for seventeen days that she threw off our yoke, but if there had been a few more Indians with her spirit in those anxious times, the British would not now have been masters of India.

Other women have power during the minorities of their sons, and keep this power after the sons have grown up. I had the pleasure of talking with the mother and wife of the Maharajah of Gwalior, one of the most enterprising and Europeanised of the Indian princes. We were invited to the Palace for the birthday party of the Dowager Maharani, and joined the Indian men and the British men and women who were her guests at games and conversation in the garden.

The royal ladies and their attendants only shared in the festivities by watching them through the screened windows of their apartments, but afterwards the lady guests



went indoors and spoke to their Highnesses, whilst one or two specially favoured gentlemen were allowed to talk to them through the hanging screens. The Dowager herself held the reins of government whilst her son was young, and is quite capable now of giving him advice, and taking his place when he is away from home, whilst his wife, I understand, has charge of some of his finances as her daily share of responsibility. There is a shadow over the lives of this young couple. Married whilst still a child herself, the wife has no children. She is now well on in the twenties, but is small and fragile-looking, as if she were a child still. By all the laws of heirship and of religion the Maharajah ought to marry a second wife to secure an heir. Will he give way to custom and convenience and perchance break the heart of his first love, or will he hold to the Western ideal and keep himself only unto her? Which way does the Dowager's influence draw him? Such are the problems which occur in the East and from which we are free.

I had a glimpse of another royal tragedy in a visit I paid at Baroda to the widow of the Gaekwar's eldest son. The princess was at her lessons when I called, and came from them to talk to me and to show me



her children. She is only eighteen now (1909); she has two little girls; and her youngest baby, the prince, now about one year and a half old, was born only a few weeks before his father's death. This is the princess to secure whom a Committee was appointed when the prince came to a marriageable age. The Committee was romantic enough to send up several names for the prince's approval, so that he had some choice in the matter. The widowed princess has her mother and grandmother living with her, and an English nurse, who shares with her the charge of the children. The young girl, for she is no more, is wisely devoting four hours a day to study, two hours of which are given to English, for education is decidedly hampered when one is the mother of three children at an age when European young ladies are still at school.

The princess looked sweetly pretty in her white widow's robes, and she was gentle and courteous and smiling. By the death of her husband she is condemned to perpetual seclusion and quietude; the joys of life are forfeited by widows however early in the springtime of their life the blow may fall. Princess Padmavadi has her children to live for, but many girls are widows before



they have been wives. I heard on excellent Indian authority of a marriage ceremony which had actually been gone through before the birth of the contracting parties, who were represented by balls of flowers. One of the mothers remarked when she was being warned of possible disaster which might follow a marriage she was planning for a little girl of five years old: "My baby might have been born a widow."

The stepmother of this widowed princess is one of the most Europeanised of Indian princesses. She travels in Europe with the Gaekwar without any shade of Purdah, and is well known in high English society. In Bombay she also goes about freely, but in her own State she does not quite give up the old ways, and retires behind a modified Purdah as long as she is in Baroda. The Maharani of Burdwan, on the other side of India (whose title does not, however, carry a kingdom with it), has emerged from Purdah with the active approval of her husband during the last year or two, and this lady, who until a few months ago had never gone into mixed company or been seen by men outside her own family circle, is now subjected to the infliction of having to make speeches at the opening of bazaars. Surely she must recognise that there are at



any rate some penances in life from which Purdah saves its devotees.

Many other tales I heard of this seclusion. One high official's wife told me of a lady who was carried right into her drawing-room in a gilded jewelled palanquin, and stepped out from it quite overcome with fright and shyness. It was the first time she had ever been outside the grounds of her own house. Another lady of the ruling caste told me how she had visited amongst some Ranis in an out-of-the-way district, where education and modern civilisation were unknown, and found there a girl with a good English education, keen on reading, ready to talk on all the topics of the day, but who had been married to a son of this backward family. The poor girl was as unhappy and stifled in her uncongenial surroundings as a fish out of water, and hailed the visit of an Englishwoman as a ray of light in the darkness.

Then there was the old Begum, peace be to her ashes, who was strictest of the strict in her observance of Purdah and retirement, yet sufficiently closely related to our Mother Eve to yield to the offer of an English lady friend to take her out driving in disguise so that she might see the world unhampered by the shutters and curtains of her palanquin.



Our own customs with regard to ladies naturally are looked at very much askance. Our dances where men and women, often strangers to each other, revolve in pairs, shock Indian women, and the unpleasant impression is not lessened by the low necks of the ladies' dresses. A Viceroy's wife who wanted to raise the dignity of English womanhood in the eyes of the Indians would do well to pass a sumptuary law with regard to the amount of clothing that the ladies attending her Court should wear, and also perhaps as to the kind of private theatricals in which young maidens should take part.

So far I have given instances of the life of ladies of high rank, but they are typical of all.

Endless varieties of etiquette exist. One caste and one family may do things which to another caste or family would be anathema. In visiting zenanas I had to speak very warily and put my questions with a considerable amount of hesitation, for whilst in some places, for instance, I found it quite correct for the ladies of the house to play or sing for my entertainment, in other houses a round-about suggestion that the ladies might take some interest in such pastimes would evidently have been a deadly insult had I not been an ignorant foreigner



and barbarian. "I am ashamed to ask my mother that," said one boy to me apologetically when he was acting as interpreter between me and his stepmother and numerous sisters and sisters-in-law, whilst in another house the hint roused a most lively interchange of jokes between the hostess and the ladies invited to meet me, which the interpreter, an elderly woman attendant, avoided translating to me.

But through all, certain common features are found: marriage before girlhood is passed; consequent seclusion from the outside world, the husband and the immediate family forming the horizon of the thoughts and plans of each day; knowledge of our outer world gained only at second-hand, or by peeping through corners and crevices; the blank lives of the widows; and in some cases the growing desire for emancipation and for a freedom more like that of which they have examples always before them in the womenfolk of the British Raj.



X

THE WOMEN OF INDIA

(Continued)

I MIGHT almost sum up the position of women in India by saying that it is a country without young girls. One simply pines to see an English maiden in her early teens, for the curse upon the British Raj is that for reasons of health parents cannot keep their children with them, after they are a few years old, until they are full grown and ready to move in society.

I remember in a dingy station how my heart gave a glad leap because I saw an English skirt approaching in the distance which was a foot or two above the ground and so proved that its wearer was still not grown up, and when the girl came near it was a joy simply to sit and look at her, though in England I pass every day dozens of maidens of the same age who are more attractive-looking.

Amongst the Indians I certainly saw many most charming girls in their teens. Some



come back to my memory whom I met in various zenanas, and who were radiantly and delicately beautiful in their coloured silks and dainty jewels. But one had to remember that they were married women, perhaps mothers of families, with the responsibilities of life already settled for them. The poetry of maidenhood is absent; the child is transformed into the wife without those precious years of waiting and growth when the princely knight is still in the future and the romance of life is still ethereal and delightful in its uncertainty.

Amongst the poorer classes it is just the same. In the villages dear little dark-eyed girls run up to one and smile, and one's experienced guide announces that they are matrons because they are wearing bracelets above their elbows. Or in the jute or cotton mills one sees little girls whom one almost suspects of being under even the low age (nine years) at which children may work in mills in India, and one is told that the red paint along the parting of the black hair is the sign that they are married. I asked an Indian lady doctor one day whether there were fewer child-mothers now than formerly, and she told me that she had attended one mother of fifteen that day and one of fourteen the day before. The physical



results of such motherhood have been attested as bad by quite indisputable medical evidence. In 1890, after the tragic death of the child-wife Pulmani Dasi, a memorial against child-marriage signed by fifty-five lady doctors in India was presented to the Government. Its cramping effects, mentally and morally, are acknowledged as evil by the most earnest of Indian reformers.

Upon this the questions naturally arise—In what direction are reformers in India working to change these customs which they recognise as evil, and what progress are they making? We have all heard how the British Government abolished Sati, or the burning of the widow with the husband's dead body. This was in 1829, and a petition was presented to the Privy Council against the abolition, which was signed by 18,000 Indians, including members of the best Calcutta families.

I suppose now it would be difficult to get one signature in favour of its restitution.

But there are complaints not altogether without justification that the zeal for social improvement which led progressive Indians and English to work together for such reforms as the abolition of Sati, the prohibition of infanticide, the raising of the age of consent, and the Widow Remarriage Act,



has waned, and that advanced thinkers espouse political agitation and neglect social reform.

It is pointed out that "cold Sati"; the cutting off of the widows from all social pleasures and independence, is a more lingering cruelty than burning alive, and charges are made against Indian reformers who marry children themselves or who refuse to countenance any departure from tradition in the case of even the youngest widows in their own family. On the other hand, we must recognise that it is hard to fight against the decrees of caste which have all the force of social custom backed up by the religion of generations.

Quotations are given from the old sacred books to show that child-marriage is a comparatively recent innovation. Many indeed say that this and the zenana system came into force amongst the Hindus as a protection for their girls and women against the Mohammedan invaders. A parallel to this may be found in recent years in the Chenab Colony, one of the Punjab deserts so wonderfully turned into fruitful land by a system of canals. In the times when the land was desert the Janglis, the old grazier population somewhat like our gypsies, used to marry their men at thirty to thirty-five



years, the women at twenty-five to thirty. They said they were unwilling to yield their independence too young. As soon as the land became fertile, colonists from other parts of India were drafted in and soon outnumbered the Janglis. Now these latter marry their girls at twelve to fourteen years of age, and the reason given is their general distrust of their immigrant neighbours: "Now no one can be relied upon."

The Indian reformer nowadays who swears that he will not marry a child-wife finds it difficult to meet with any young maiden of more mature years still unwed, and if he proposes to marry a widow, though this is legal in the eyes of British officials, it cuts both the bridegroom and bride off from their families, and consequently upsets their whole status both in society and in their religious life. Yet there certainly is a gradual movement towards later marriage and more equality between the sexes, and this is chiefly helped by the spread of education amongst girls and women as well as amongst boys and men.

Though the lead in female education was taken by Christians (the first day school for girls being started in 1807 by Mrs. Hannah Marshman, a missionary), the Parsees were not far behind, and the late Miss Clarke,



daughter of the present Governor of Bombay, helped this community to celebrate by historical tableaux the jubilee, two or three years ago, of its first attempts at systematic female education. Now, advanced schools for girls are springing up under the Arya Somaj and the Brahmo Somaj, and even the Mohammedans are coming into line. At Aligahr, the seat of their celebrated boys' school and college, I found one girls' school established and another being talked of. Most of the secondary schools for girls have to include a great deal of primary education. Indeed, in the whole of India, in 1909, excluding European schools, there were only 1,208 girls in the higher stage of secondary schools, out of a total of 560,261 under instruction, and 563 of these were in Bombay.

The number of girls in primary schools is 545,091, as compared with 348,510 in 1902. Many of these little girls go to the boys' schools and learn with their brothers, but it is usually much easier to get them to attend separate girls' schools, and even in country districts the number of these is being increased. In one village we visited we heard there was a girls' school, and after a great hunt we found it in a side street. It turned out to be a small dark room



with about half a dozen little girls sitting round on the floor with slates and readers, listening to a pleasant-looking widow who was teaching them.

But though there are signs of advance, what is being done so far is but a drop in the bucket. In Bombay there is 5·9 per cent of girls in school for every hundred of school-going age; in Madras 5·7; in Bengal 3·2; in the United Provinces only 1·2. Three or four girls receiving education out of every hundred is not much to be proud of, especially when we know that most of these, largely owing to the early age of marriage, only attain a smattering of reading and writing and exceedingly elementary knowledge. The obstacle now in the way is not so much in the opposition of the people themselves. In the zenanas they are crying out for learning. I shall never forget the eager hungry look of a Mohammedan girl, dressed up in silks and jewels, whose mother told me she had some teachers in for her, but there was no school within reach to which to send her. Her brother interpreted to me that his sister had been "very, very much wanting to see you," and I felt it pathetic that a few minutes' glimpse of a visitor from the outside world from which she was cut off, should be such



a red-letter day in her life. In a most interesting Purdah school in Lahore, to which the young ladies are fetched in closed carriages, and whose garden walls are highly fenced to prevent any stray male eye from penetrating within, I was told of one pupil who, unlike most Indian girls, was slow at her books. She seemed hopelessly stupid, and kept the others back so much that her teacher at last said she had better not come to school. But the poor girl wept so bitterly, and explained in such a heartbroken way that she was betrothed to a boy who was receiving English education, and she feared he would despise her and perhaps cast her off if she knew nothing of what he was interested in, that the teacher relented and took her back. As a proof of industry, the poor girl was trying to learn a page of a Royal Reader by heart. I am not sure whether she meant to edify her fiancé and brighten his domestic hearth by repeating it to him and so making English conversation when he returned.

It is not without significance that in two of the best known modern Indian novels, *Anandamath*, by Bankim Chandra Chatterji, and the *Indian Inner Home*, by Babu Taraknath Ganguli, the heroines, Santi and Svarnalata respectively, are both repre-



sented as being educated, as the result of special circumstances, with boys, and that their possession of learning which most young women have not got is made to contribute to their charms and virtues. Santi indeed leaves the shelter of her home and becomes the companion of her husband in his "hero's mission" as soldier and patriot in the band of the *Children*. "He is engaged in a pious work, and I have come to share it with him," she says, and when their mission is accomplished they wander forth together as ascetics to visit the shrines.

When Svarnalata's father finds her with inky fingers and face, he exclaims, "You are learning to write! What good will that do you?" Her brother, who has been teaching her in his own holidays, defends her, and the father acquiesces gently, "I see my Lakshmi [the Goddess of domestic peace and prosperity] is a Saraswati [the Goddess of learning] as well."

The ideal of modern Indian women is more and more to be Saraswati as well as Lakshmi, though the prejudices and difficulties to be overcome are almost inconceivable to our Western minds.

The demand for wider education exists, but the obstacles are twofold. The first is the expense. Our Government can spend



over twenty millions per annum on the Army, but only two millions out of public funds on education. This difficulty applies to education both for boys and girls; but the second one is special for girls—namely, the difficulty of getting women teachers. The division between the sexes makes men teachers impossible in most places, but the women marry so early that they have no time to train for teaching. Here, again, we have to get rid of our English ideas before we can approach the Indian problem. As the material for teachers we must think of girls who leave school before they are in their teens, or, at any rate, whilst in their early teens, in order to get married, and who after marriage are “purdah nashin,” kept behind the veil. To get women teachers the customs of ages have to be broken down, as is the case to a slowly increasing extent, or the Government must fall back upon the widows and confer a double benefit by giving them status and interesting work and finding women teachers for the zenanas and the girls’ schools. The Hindus themselves have started some very interesting widows’ homes, where some of the widows are given book-learning, whilst others concentrate more upon needlework and other hand industries. Training uneducated



widows, however, is not so easy as training girls straight from school, and hence the progress is slow and the standard of teaching still very low.

But I believe that national pride will make a way in spite of difficulties. I do not want the Indian women to be turned into replicas of the English ones. I want them to develop along their own lines, and this, I believe, they are preparing to do. I have visited women's clubs, managed by Indian women. I have read women's papers and magazines edited by Indian women. I have talked with Indian lady doctors and with a Parsee lady lawyer who is recognised in India as no lady lawyer is as yet in England. An Indian lady once mentioned to me casually in the course of conversation that she was on the voters' roll, and on inquiry I have found that there are 527 Hindus, 260 Mohammedans, 453 Parsees, seventy-three Europeans and others entered as women voters (wives, widows and spinsters) on the burgess roll of Bombay. Consequently Indian women have already got the municipal vote "on the same terms as it is granted to men," and in the case of those members of the new Legislative Councils who are elected by municipalities, the indirect vote of "Mithabai, wife of Tulsidas Surji," counts



for as much as that of Tulsidas Surji himself.

But these symptoms of advance on Western lines are of little importance compared with the uprising which is going on behind the Purdahs and which is hidden from our Anglo-Indian officials. It is to the women that the strength of the Swadeshi movement, the patronising of Indian-made goods and the further attempt to boycott English goods, are due. It is the women who resent more keenly than the men the slights constantly put upon the natives of the country by its ill-mannered British invaders. It was enthusiasm for Mr. Tilak as a champion of Indian nationality which made the ladies of Bombay hold a crowded public meeting of protest.

It is sheer blindness to overlook the women's influence as a factor in the unrest now troubling the Government in India. How to enlist that influence and to induce the women of the country to co-operate with us in its progress and good government is a problem which, if it is to be satisfactorily solved, will need patience, effort, money, and, above all, sympathetic imagination and a power of looking at things from the point of view of other people.



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PART III
OPINIONS



I

INDIA

I HAVE written of India; but before one has been here a week, one doubts if India exists. The sightseer, with wonder in his eyes, hastens to the Bombay bazaars. He stands perhaps at the corner where the silversmiths work opposite to the copper-smiths, and where the gilded Jain temple is so conspicuous a feature in the street architecture. Past him pour, as though ranked in a pageant, tribes, races, creeds, castes, all distinctively marked by dress, hair, carriage, face, religious symbols borne on the forehead—each one standing out from the other. The ear may not have been trained yet to the varieties of language, but if it were, it would hear a multitude of tongues, and those using them understand each other as little as the English onlooker understands any one of them. There are 14 of these languages in use in India, and they are so diverse that they belong to six great families of human speech. 60,000,000



speak Hindi, 44,500,000 Bengali, 37,000,000 Bihari, 18,000,000 Marathi, 10,000,000 Guzerati, and so on. This is but an epitome of the land itself.

Two great religions divide its people—Hinduism with 207,000,000 adherents, Mohammedanism with 62,500,000; and this religious difference indicates to a great extent different historical origins, conflicting national ideals, and disrupting social sentiments. Within these two camps there are further divisions. The Mohammedan Sunni is in conflict with his brother Shiah. It is only over a matter as to whether a caliph or two were false or true; but caliphs are exceedingly important personages amongst the Faithful. Though these Mohammedan divisions result occasionally in civil rivalry and discord they are not such as to destroy religious unity. That is not exactly the case with the Hindu camp, where divisions of caste mean so much that they not only separate the people, but condemn one-fourth of the total Hindu population to a life little removed from that of the beasts that perish. The Sudra is not even to receive religious instruction or to take part in religious observance; the penance required for killing him, according to the Laws of Manu, is the same as that required



for killing a cat, or a frog, or a crow. He is less sacred than a cow. Nationality can exist in spite of many differences of race and religion, but only on condition that in the mind of the citizen there is some sense of oneness which transcends all sense of separation and difference. The Indian caste system, expressing as it does not merely a social distinction, but a religious repulsion of the clean against the unclean, and involving the existence of an outcast class of millions whose very shadows taint the sacred ones, seems to be quite inconsistent with a national unity. A ruling caste, retaining power by force or fraud, holding authority over the masses without consulting them, oppressing them without compunction, and treating them at best as mere means to its own ends, appears to be the political system which alone corresponds to the religion of Hinduism.

The further one wanders on this road of inquiry the greater appear the difficulties ahead. History adds to the confusion. The people have no history in common in which they take pride. The population are like layers on the land. They came in wave after wave, always driving eastwards and southwards, the original Dravidians, like our own ancient peoples, being pushed far



from the points at which the invaders entered, the various Aryan invasions spending themselves and leaving their traces in different territories. A language map of modern India is a most striking object-lesson in these repeated invasions. The Mah-ratta, with his inheritance of conquest still fresh in his memory—for it is only a hundred years since his princes ruled and appeared to be in a fair way to become the masters of India—broods resentfully over the past, and nurses in his heart a pride of race and caste which is nourished by the feeling that he belongs to the highest of the Brahmins as well as to the last of the conquerors; the Rajput, with his chivalrous military spirit and contempt for the educated Hindu political agitator, boasts a purity of blood running clear since an early Aryan emigration across the Himalayas; the Bengali is literary, of nimble mind, sensitive, harbouring resentment, nationalist to the core. These are some of the types which history has made for our confusion. Then on the north-west we meet with the last invader next to ourselves—the Mohammedan, whose children still live in the Middle Ages, who cares nothing about India, whose notion of social unity may be Pan-Islamism, or if not that, is nothing at all, who has no part in the politi-



cal agitations bred of Western thought and education, and who is as ready as his forebears were to pour south and east with a rifle on his back and a horse under him, fighting and picking up victuals on the way. To this diversity it is unnecessary to add the Mongolian races which are found on the northern borders, and which one sees in the streets of Simla and Darjeeling and in the terraced fields of Nepaul, and the totally uncivilised men of the bush and the hills.

Then there is the important political fact that ~~693~~ Native States exist over an area of 679,393 square miles against a British area of 1,087,000 square miles, and with a population of 62,500,000 souls.

Can these be united in one nation? When the Mahratta Brahmin and the Bengali Babu cry together for a nationalist movement, does each only seek for the dominance of his own kind? Has he deluded himself so that "India" in his mouth means himself and his own caste? Has he honestly faced what the morrow of India's independence is to bring?

On this point, too, history is unmerciful. The story of India is but a series of kaleidoscopic changes, in which the popular notion that the Mohammedans conquered the



country for good is seen to be as little in accord with truth as that the Mahrattas were gaining real control when the English appeared on the scene and General Lake with guns and sepoy ended the rule of the Peshwas. Would there be permanence now any more than there was permanence then? Would the retreat of the English invader be anything more than the signal for another to appear, and would not the end of one régime of subjection be but the opening of another?

Far away back in the heroic ages there was an India. Learning and art flourished within its borders. Its commerce flowed wherever markets then were. Its science explored nearly as far in the jungles of creation as our own. Its philosophy penetrated deep into the mystery of experience and aspiration. "Bring me one of the teachers of India," said Alexander's master, Plato, when told that his youthful pupil planned campaigns across the Himalayas. But that India has vanished. There is a glimpse of it in the Mahabharata and the Ramayana; vestiges of it are found in the remnants of the scientific literature that survived the furies of raid and conquest; traces of it are met with in the



literature of other people. The Nationalist movement of to-day is trying to revive it as an inspiring memory, but it is very, very far off, and the recollection of it in the race is dim.

Finally, this discovery comes after one has gone a little beneath the surface of Indian life. The civilisation and the genius of India are now patched by the alien civilisation and genius of the West. The political problem of India, for instance, is not that of an Oriental people, but of an Oriental people whose leaders are imbued with Western education and are trying to assimilate its culture. From this comes confusion.

At first sight, and on the surface, India appears to be a land where people live side by side but do not form a national community. The hope of a united India, an India conscious of a national unity of purpose and destiny, seems to be the vainest of vain dreams.



II

THE WAYS OF THE "NATIVE"

THE visitor to India, particularly if he shows signs of consulting Indian opinion, is reminded at every turn that the Hindu has many vices. The whole population is presented to him as being heathen, whereas there is, perhaps, no more highly civilised people in the world. They may lack in force of will, but they certainly do not lack in civilisation. But at the head of their worst children is the Babu, the educated or semi-educated Hindu. The Babu is the devil incarnate. He has a nimble mind and no conscience; he is as crooked as sin, and in his hands simple-minded Westerns like myself are as clay under the moulding thumb of the potter. He is, in addition, a mean-spirited coward, who sneaks through life doing mischief because he loves it. In fact, no one can do justice to the Babu except an Anglo-Indian of at least thirty years' standing. That is what the stranger is told by his kith and kin.



I met this Babu. He has, indeed, the characteristics of all subject peoples that have been maligned with one accord. I have also met his detractors. They, too, have the characteristics of all ruling castes whose opinions have hardly been challenged. Both the Babu and the Babu's detractors would be none the worse of some fresh air, and both require a fresh mind to deal impartially with them.

The defects of the Indian are patent. Some of them are his own, others are ours. He has always been prone to sell justice. When he is in a position to exact bribes and gifts he does not miss his chance. The canal and irrigation service,¹ the pettier public works, the personal offices filled by bearers, chuprassies and the like, are dishonestly held. This is partly due to Indian

¹ This service suffers greatly. I was told of an Indian Colonel who in conversation with the officer of his district admitted that he paid bribes to the canal officials. He was told he must stop doing so, and he promised. Six months elapsed and he met the official again. "How did that arrangement about the canal get on?" he was asked. "Damnably," was the reply. "I am now getting only about half the water I used to get for my mills, and my dues have been increased by an amount about double of what I used to give in bribes." The collector who told me this story said he had had bribes twice offered to him during his service, the sums being 100 rupees and two rupees.



traditions because these officers have always been as accustomed to bribes as waiters in English restaurants have been to tips. In fact, what we call bribes the Indian regards as tips; and when servants of the sahib go to his visitors and in a barefaced way ask for gifts, they are, in their own eyes, doing nothing more than a waiter does who touches his front hair and whines, "Remember the waiter, sir." Moreover, one cannot help feeling that had the Anglo-Indian been determined to eradicate this evil he could have done so, intricate though its ramifications undoubtedly are. I was the guest of highly placed officials who have insisted upon honesty and have got it.

Bribery, however, will never disappear until proper wages are paid. The servants who attend collectors are paid Rs. 5 to Rs. 7¹ per month; village accountants, who keep the records on which assessments are made, receive Rs. 10, Rs. 12, and Rs. 14; field superintendents, who check these accountants, get Rs. 20 to Rs. 30. The ordinary police, the most corrupt of all the public servants of India, are paid from Rs. 8 to Rs. 12 per month, and head constables, whose dishonesties and impositions can hardly be surpassed, are only

¹ The exchange value of the rupee is now fixed at fifteen to the pound sterling.



paid Rs. 15 to Rs. 20.¹ If you want your enemy hanged for murder or imprisoned for any crime you choose to charge him with, your nearest police officer is probably ready to oblige you for a very moderate consideration. If you want him arrested and paraded through the streets in handcuffs, that is the easiest matter in the world. It is pleasant to bear record, however, that although I was in the very best position to hear in confidence of the character of the Indian magistrates, a very small number of them were even suspected of tempering justice with monetary considerations and this did not apply to a single important judge.² The corruption of the lower grades of the service, however, cannot be denied.

Unfortunately we do not always set a good example ourselves. The nimble wit

¹ Some of these wages are now being raised. But the increase is only nominal, owing to the increased cost of living. The Government of Bombay (*Financial Statement*, 1909-10), for instance, has had to raise the salaries of its clerical staff from 10 to 20 per cent, owing to dearness of necessaries; but when the pay of the police is raised by a smaller fraction, we are asked to accept that as an increase in real wages.

² It is worth while observing that nine-tenths of the original civil suits and more than three-fourths of the magisterial business of the country come before Indian judges and magistrates.—*Memorandum on Indian Administration*. Cd. 4956. 1909.



of an Indian sees things to which we are blind. When our officials spend public money extravagantly on matters which affect themselves—for instance, when a certain official of ours spends thousands of rupees from the public purse in moving a tree from one corner of his house to another—the acute Indian sees in that precisely the same thing which, when practised by himself, we call appropriation of public revenues to personal use. But his most frequently quoted parallel is our system of travelling allowances. Every one knows that officers, from school inspectors to chaplains, put large sums of money into their pockets by charging travelling allowances which they never spend. I heard of a Church dignitary who was attending a Diocesan Conference at the Government expense and who was to make a profit from his allowance at the end of the meetings. I heard of a school inspector who insisted upon billeting himself in private houses whilst drawing hotel expenses. And the smiling Babu in the office knows all about it, and when you say to him, "Now tell me about T.A.," he grins a knowing grin. There is not a man in the whole service who does not know about T.A. It is referred to by its initials like a close personal friend. This is an



example of how in India the moral preceptor must be as pure as Cæsar's wife, and must keep examining his own habits with a mind constantly freshened by intimate contact with its unfamiliar surroundings. The West must ask no excuses for its own bad habits which it is not prepared to give to the East for its bad habits.

Akin to this defect is that of bearing false witness. This is one of the most depressing experiences of the friends of the Indian people, and is responsible for destroying in many a man the sympathy with which he began his official career. It cannot be condoned, and unfortunately the struggle for existence which rages in the lower grades of the Indian bar makes the reform of witnesses impossible. British justice is thus made difficult by the destruction of its basis of tolerably honest evidence. The habit of bearing false witness is, moreover, augmenting those forces in Indian life which make social cohesion impossible. But it must not be judged apart from the whole judicial system which we have established in India. This is what happens. A witness gives evidence which he knows to be false. It is concocted beforehand, and he does his best to stick to his story and baffle the lawyers. Most



people simply put this down to a lying spirit, attach to the people of India this spirit as an attribute, and pursue the subject no further. This explanation, however, is altogether insufficient. The phenomenon requires more study.

In the first place, the state of things here described has arisen in spite of the strong condemnation pronounced upon it in the Sacred Books. "The witness who speaks falsely shall be bound fast by Varuna's fetters during one hundred births: let men therefore give no false testimony. . . . Naked and shorn, tormented with hunger and thirst, and deprived of sight shall the man who gives false evidence beg for food with a potsherd at the door of his enemy."¹ But in the great law book of the devout Hindu from which these verses are taken, exception was made in the case of a man who lied from religious and family motives. This explains some of the shortcoming. It is easy to stretch this exemption so that it affects the relations between the Hindu and his heathen conquerors. The Hindu does not regard us as coming within his codes of honour and of religious obligation. We do not share his inner nature. We are Sudras, outcasts.

¹ *Laws of Manu*. Section viii. 82 and 93.



Thus, a considerable amount of false evidence is permitted and is actually given under the belief that a man should always befriend a member of his family or his caste. A member of a well-known Mission told me that the son of one of their most sincere converts had been prosecuted for cheating passengers at railway stations. The father immediately started to get together a crowd of false witnesses and to pay them for their services. The Mission authorities came to hear of it, called the father before them, and told him he must stop. The man was aghast. Such unnatural conduct he had never known! It is said that he submitted to the discipline of the Mission, but that he never pretended to agree with its decision and was very sore indeed.

But, in the second place, one of the foundations of British legal justice—the law of evidence—has not only never been accepted in India but is contrary to Indian conceptions of how to do justice. In India justice has been administered personally. Evidence has not been sought from witnesses appearing on one side or the other, so much as from men who knew and were themselves in the position of judges reporting to higher judges. The village headman, or the village Council of Elders, or the village Panchayat



gave out justice more after the manner of arbitration than of judgment given on evidence. Thus it came about that when British legal methods were introduced, the traditions which were inseparable from them at home were not found in India at all, and the Indian had to put his own meaning into them and take up his own attitude to them. Unfortunately, he began wrong. His conception of a witness is not one who speaks the truth, but one who tells a tale and runs the gauntlet of a hostile examination. He takes exactly the same view of his function as a barrister does of his. He is there to support his client; and if his opponent is not clever enough, or if the case for the other side is not convincing enough, he has no qualms if he is instrumental in getting a criminal let off or an innocent man sent to jail.

The ethics of our own scientific expert witnesses may serve to reveal the mind of the Indian in its relation to the method of doing justice by means of evidence. The scientific expert accepts his fee from either side and simply does his best, like a lawyer, for his paymaster. He would feel insulted if I said that he perverted the truth when performing his functions, though I could do so behind the shelter of Lord Bramwell's



gradation of liars. He persuades himself, I suppose, that he is telling the truth with a bias on the side of his fee. This little quibble, however, has no existence for the subtle Indian. He prevaricates like a philosopher, and not like a man of dull wit under delusions. Thus we see that at the bottom of the moral phenomenon presented by Indian witnesses is the simple fact that our law of evidence is an alien method, and that it has failed from the very beginning to gather round it the traditions of the countries where it is native to the historical soil.

When one understands so much, one is also possessed of the explanation why the Indian is so litigious. It is on everybody's mouth that the Indian is ruining himself in law courts, and that this is an important factor in the distribution of wealth and service in the country.¹ In 1856 there were 730,000 civil suits instituted in British India; in 1907 there were 1,867,995. What really has happened is that we have destroyed in Indian social life all those courts of arbitration and all those offices which had as one of their functions the settlement of personal disputes. We have thus driven the people to the pleader and

¹ There are 200,000 lawyers of various degrees of status and respectability in India.



the barrister and the law court; and these things are like alcohol—they create an appetite for themselves. Moreover, they appeal to the gambling weakness of the Indian, who often embarks upon litigation in the same spirit as a man puts a Napoleon on the tables at Monte Carlo. The methods of Western justice are but a wheel of fortune to the Indian mind and are played with accordingly. Their existence in India is evidence of the destruction of an old social organisation.

An attempt should be made to retrace some of our steps towards the methods of justice native to the soil and the people. The power to appeal should be limited far more than it is, but, above all, arbitration courts of village elders should be established for certain civil cases, especially for land and property disputes. In the old days, the village Panchayat was such a court. It was indeed the judicial organ of a petty republic. Early administrators like Sir Thomas Munro, who was governor of Madras in 1819, tell that the native litigant who had a good case preferred to appeal to the Panchayat, but he who had a bad one sought the decision of a Collector. Munro was one of the very few men who saw how the whole of the spiritual make-up of the



Hindu went to form his legal system, and how little our officials understood that fact. He wrote : " I conscientiously believe that for the purpose of discriminating the motives of action and the chances of truth in the evidence of such a people, the entire life of the most acute and able European judge, devoted to that single object, could not place him on a level with an intelligent Hindu Panchayat, which is an admirable instrument of decision."¹

But the problem of India will never be solved by the West brooding over and moralising upon the pin-pricks which the Eastern mind inflicts upon it. The educated Hindu is the centre of the trouble,² and we should study India and the psychology of its people in relation to him. We can brand him and curse him, as our officials on the whole now do, or we can accept him, as a select few of our officials advise, and in either case take the consequences. He is now a difficulty in the administration of a bureaucracy, whereas he should be a problem in the government of co-operating

¹ One cannot overlook the likelihood that as these courts have been so long out of use, it may not be possible to re-establish them endowed with their old prestige.

² Mr. Gokhale has stated that nine-tenths of the educated Hindus are loyally disposed, and one-tenth is sulky or disloyal.



authorities. We have created him, and if nothing else moves us to patient sympathy with him, that ought to do so.

He is, in the main, a Bengali. He is an embodiment of the virtues and the vices of the Bengali. The last king of Bengal preferred poetry to a kingdom, and inaction to action; and so, when the enemy was thundering at his front door, he went away into peace by a back exit, and the West and its kind have laughed at and insulted him and his kind ever since.¹ But I am not at all so sure that the day of the Bengali is over. He has an awkward way of using his subtle mind when he is driven into a corner, and he has an upsetting tendency to treat lightly what the West treasures. When we fight him, he is found to occupy a position we do not understand, to use weapons which are unfamiliar to us, and to employ salves and balms which produce, so far as we are concerned, most confusing results. His Paris exiles apply Western thought in a way we never intended to apply it; his condemned men smile that if we kill them their disembodied spirits will be more effective against us than they are before the death of their

¹ This flight of Laksman Sen is the subject of one of the finest of Tagore's pictures.



hampering bodies. The contest between us and them is like a battle between a slow-moving thing of the earth with crushing paws, and a strong-winged thing of the air with sharp talons.

We take much consolation in the thought, however, that the educated Hindus are only a handful, not a million in a population of three hundred times as many. And yet the few are becoming many. Every year adds to their numbers—and their disappointments. They control the native press, vernacular and English. What public opinion there is in India is swayed by them, and—this is even worse—by the priests. Finally, it is as true in India as it is in the West that a few make the opinions of the many, and that the cells which determine growth are of an insignificant bulk compared with those which maintain form and mass.

I fear that the house in which we are sheltering our official hopes is built on the sand.

This comes to one like an intuition as one surveys the swayings, the expectancies, the agitations of India. And it is strengthened as one comes to understand the nature of the human material upon which we have to act. All critical passages in our Indian history, all sensational situations in recent Indian tales, turn upon the



mobility of the mass mind of India.¹ The people of India are like the aged Simeon and Anna the prophetess, who watched by the Temple for the Messiah. Every year prophets arise who blaze across the religious firmament like a comet, and palpitating hearts are drawn to them. The Indian mind is in a constant state of expectancy, and a new leader or a new agitation finds it as mobile as the moon finds the waters.

A mind constantly seeking the Eternal, not with foot on solid ground but with wings in air, is a terrible thing for Westerns to deal with. And such is the Indian mind. The rich Indian whose hands are full of the jewels of earth hears the call of the Infinite Void in his soul; and he gets up, lays aside his possessions, and, clothed in ashes and with naught but begging-bowl in his hand, goes out to seek peace. The common man leaves his place and, clad in saffron, or in other pilgrim garb, wanders away to some sacred place, to dip in some stream of immortality, to worship in some procession, so that his soul may be satisfied and the cool shades of peace come to refresh his weary heart. The stormy petrel of a politician feels the shadow of this life lie heavily upon him

¹ *The Hosts of the Lord*, for instance.



and he lays his pen down and, with "the means of purification, silent, unallured by the objects around him," according to the injunctions in the Laws of Manu, "leaving the merits of his good deeds to those who love him and his evil deeds to those who hate him, he goes through meditation to the Eternal Brahma."

This spirit, blurred by blackguardism, dulled by indifference, coarsened by deceit, is nevertheless in its purity the spirit which we have to understand.

I was talking one day with one of those educated Hindus, and I was advancing arguments to convince him of the weakness of his position in India. An agnostic, a town-dweller, an Englishman in dress and veneer, an insignificant minority—what was he but that? In reply to the last he said: "Yes, a minority! But you do not know the mind of India. You inoculate us. We can pass the word round that your serum is poison. You then inoculate yourselves as a proof of your good faith. We reply through a million gossips that the English inoculate themselves with rose-water.¹ We can announce a miracle; we can proclaim a revelation from the gods; we can spread tales of desecrated shrines and temples, of

¹ This is the reproduction of an actual instance.



cow-killing. Ah ! you do not know the Indian mind. A minority ! Minorities and majorities are things of the West, not of India."

That is so. A subtle educated class, a credulous mass :¹ that is India. The people are as full of an insane suspicion of us to-day as they were before the Mutiny. And the Administration which overlooks that fact, and which puts its hopes on the placidity and friendship of the mass, is like the inexperienced summer boatman who trusts himself to a sea subject to angry storms which arise without warning and apparently from all the quarters of heaven at the same time. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou canst not tell whither it cometh or whither it goeth. Such is the mass mind of India.

The educated Indian is the natural co-operator with the Administration, and woe betide us if we fail to accept the situation which we ourselves have created.

¹ The problem created by the credulity of the people cannot be regarded too seriously. On its amusing side this credulity is best seen in advertisements of medicines. As a rule, they are offensive to English eyes and cannot be quoted. On its serious side it is seen in the criminal conspiracies, the most of which are promoted by youths who, as has been shown in a recent investigation, are drafting schemes for the government of the country by a House of Commons consisting of 3,000 members, and for its defence by fairy-land fleets manned by fairy-land sailors !



III

THE NEW INDIA OF COMMERCE

THE extent to which India is becoming industrial in the factory sense of the term is very marked. The first cotton mill in India was opened in 1818,¹ the first jute mill in 1854. Now there are 220 and 45 of these mills respectively. It is estimated that there is from £11,000,000 to £13,000,000 sunk in cotton and £5,000,000 in jute factories. During the last five years the looms in cotton mills have increased by 50 per cent, the spindles by 11 per cent. In the jute mills, looms, spindles, and operators have increased by 50 per cent in the same period. The figures showing the area under such crops as cotton and jute reinforce these. There are 20,000,000 acres under cotton and about 4,000,000 under jute, but both are subject to great seasonal fluctuations. The value of the cotton crop is about

¹ This was in Calcutta, where the industry has not taken root. The first Bombay mill was started in 1851. More than one-third of the trade now centres in Bombay.



£20,000,000, that of jute about the same. The figures of occupation published in the Census are practically worthless, partly because so many people do not make a living at one calling all the year round, and therefore different enumerators have adopted different classifications, but mainly because it is impossible to separate factory workers from home workers. The figures, however, show that a population of 8,820,000 were returned in 1891 as cotton weavers, whilst 7,702,000 were so returned in 1901; but in another table, where an attempt has been made to divide out the people employed in large industries from those employed in small, cotton, as the former, employed 156,039 in 1901 and 118,000 in 1891. In Bombay 81,000 cotton operatives were enumerated in 1891, 108,000 in 1901; in Madras, 6,000 in 1891, 16,000 in 1901. In jute, the figures are 130,500 for 1901 and 64,800 for 1891.¹ 61,000 jute operatives were employed in Bengal in 1891; in 1901 there were 110,000. These are incomplete figures, but they show a tendency that is seen even better by the eye in the number of chimneys in the neighbourhood of Bombay

¹ The occupation figures given in the *Memorandum on Indian Administration* (Cd. 4956. 1909) are 212,000 in cotton mills, and 167,000 in jute mills.



and Calcutta, and in the large number of mills which one finds in process of extension.

Coal mining is also increasing in importance, the average production per annum for the five years ending 1885 having been 1,227,197 tons, whilst in 1908 the production was 12,737,770 tons. Between 1900 and 1906 banking capital increased by 60 lakhs¹ of rupees, railway and tramway capital by 11 lakhs, and mill capital by 200 lakhs. It is said that the Swadeshi movement has brought fifteen banks into existence with a capital of four crores of rupees; but the Indian habit of hoarding has as yet hampered the creation of a native banking system. It is estimated that industrial companies in India were working in 1906 with paid-up capital amounting to 556 lakhs of rupees above what it was in 1900. Rises in wages, increasing productivity per worker, Factory Acts, and so on, are following this movement in India just as they did in England.

Leaving figures on one side, one can assume that Indian factory industry is to increase. What is to happen? The Indian is very conservative. Kept apart by religious observances and born into a stream of habit stronger in its current than that

¹ There are fifteen rupees to the pound; a lakh is 100,000 rupees, a crore is one hundred times that.



which perhaps runs through any other race, the Indian may not rapidly adapt himself to the new conditions. At present the factory worker has a bit of land somewhere, or he belongs to a family in whose possessions he may share, or he has village connections. That means that he absents himself from the factory and the large town for a certain period every year, returns to agriculture, and supplements one of his incomes by the other. Whilst he is working he is far more casual than our workers. One finds him strolling about the mill or drinking water leisurely at the mill yard tap. The women leave their machines to hug and comfort yelling babies, who are crawling on the floor, sleeping by the side of machines or on piles of cotton or jute stuff, or perched on the top of the tin cans used for receiving sliver; and anything from 5 to 10 per cent of a mill staff is absent every day. This slackness of organisation means long hours, irregularity and cheating in the payment of wages,¹ the employment of children, and uneconomically used machinery. These conditions cannot continue. The worker will have to be protected in some way against the

¹ The custom is that a workman has to allow his wages to fall two months into arrear. He thus gets into the clutches of money-lenders.



selfish operations of the capitalist, and more stringent factory legislation will bring with it more stringent factory rules. Workers will break connection with village life and become nothing but factory hands. Indeed, this is already well marked. An ordinary proletariat class is arising in India—without land, without family connections, without the protection of the old social order, and dependent for what security it has on legislation and its own combinations. It will not swamp India ; it may never form a very large percentage of the population of India ; it will be important, however. Though less than 10 per cent of the Indian population lives in towns the percentage is increasing, and it is of no little significance that when the Census of 1901 was taken barely one-third of the people in Calcutta and not one-fourth of the people in Bombay were born there. Thus, even in India emigration from the country to the towns has begun.

One finds this industrial class swarming in overcrowded coolie lines, sometimes regimented by an overseer to whom the workers owe their job, and who, in consequence, demands commissions from them, sometimes living in ordinary working-class parts of the town under exceedingly bad



conditions. When the coolie lines belong to the employers, a certain amount of care is taken of the workpeople. A doctor is sometimes employed by the owners, a good supply of water is provided, and drainage channels are kept up. One with an experience of the West must look upon this commercial philanthropy with grave misgivings whatever immediate benefit it may be to the workers.

Calcutta and Bombay and similar towns will have to face a housing problem which no town in the West has ever experienced. Wages will increase, machines will be better used, the wealth of India will mount up but will remain in comparatively few hands, there will be much smoke where there is now sun. To the creation of such an India things are now shaping. At present they have only got so far as the old familiar discussion with us: Whether shorter hours will lower wages and reduce profits, and whether factory legislation is a menace to employers.

A few enlightened men, some of them mill-workers themselves, are trying to prepare for the inevitable changes. A young society called the Mill Workers' Protection Association is now at work in Bombay on lines similar to those pursued by the Women's



Industrial Council in England. For the present condition of the Indian working man is wonderfully like that of the English working woman. He does not understand his own position well enough to enable him to act effectively. Only the faintest glimmer of Trade Unionism is streaking his horizon with light.

In face of the industrial developments which one sees in Calcutta and Bombay, will hand industry survive at all? It is based on agriculture, because it depends mainly on the village market. The wares of this place and that may retain a market amongst the select few, but that will not keep in existence the millions of textile workers and silver workers, of potters and carpenters, of dyers and oil pressers, scattered all over India. As yet by far and away the greater part of the internal commerce of India takes place between local producers and local consumers, and this will remain true whilst the mass of the people live in villages and engage in agriculture. At the present moment about 70 per cent of the people of India depend more or less upon agriculture for a living.¹ That percentage

¹ The Census of 1901 showed a greater proportion than did that of 1891, but as explained in the Memorandum accompanying the tables: "The proportion for 1891



will diminish, but it will do so gradually, so that, with some assistance from public opinion and technical education, the handicraftsman can exist for a long time, though in diminishing numbers, alongside factory industry. His greatest menace is the increasing cost of living, which will raise his cost of production, whilst factory industry in India has yet broad margins for effecting economy. Swadeshi will not necessarily protect him, though it is said that it has considerably affected the demand for handloom cotton in Eastern Bengal. The handloom worker must depend ultimately upon the cheapness of his products and the taste of purchasers. If one or other fails him he will have to become an agricultural labourer or drift into the factories, and, in either case, become one of the proletariat. This struggle between factory and handloom is a grim battle, and practically every Western influence is behind the factory. Moreover, it is the economic source of not a little political unrest.

refers to the number of persons solely dependent on agriculture, whilst that for the present Census includes also those with other occupations who named the agricultural one as their chief means of support." Other differences between the two reports are also pointed out.—*Census Report*, I., pp. 207, etc.



Although there are sections of Indian opinion which look on impatiently whilst factory industry grows, and are never tired of telling us that if certain things were done, its progress would be more complete, I am not at all sure but that for the sake of India herself slow progress is best. There is a disorganisation about Indian industry; the buildings have become old rapidly; the workers are raw; the social unsettlement caused by the change has been considerable; things have been thrown together and brought together anyhow. If India were now to settle down for the time being and put her industrial life into something like order, the apparent pause in the outward evidence of increasing prosperity would be for her benefit. I know this cannot be done. Competitor struggling with competitor makes it impossible. Unregulated and disorganised, Indian industry will go on by rule of thumb as ours did; but the fact remains that even if factory industry would grow up more rapidly under Protection, it would not be a gain to India.

Be that as it may, two things trouble the industrial interests. The first is the Excise duty on cotton imposed to re-establish conditions of Free Trade after an import duty had been imposed. The industrial effect



has been almost *nil*, except that it has increased the price of cotton goods to the consumer and thus limited the market. Still, the cotton industry has advanced in India under Free Trade as well as it has advanced in any other part of the world. But the Excise has been exceedingly provocative of ill feeling. It is regarded as a proof that the interests of Lancashire are put before the interests of India by the Indian Government, and it has helped to turn India's thoughts in the direction of Protection. The income derived from the Customs and Excise duties on cotton goods amounted in 1908-9 to £1,050,000—far too great a sum in the present condition of Indian finances to be sacrificed at one swoop ; but the sooner it goes the better. It will remove a cause of considerable irritation, contribute to a reduction in the cost of living, and help towards clear economic thinking in India.

The other thing which concerns industrial India is Protection. Of Imperial Preference it thinks little and cares less. If it could, India would protect itself so as to keep out English cotton goods as much as possible.¹

¹ " If the State in India had been identified in economic interests with the Indian people, some measure of Protection might have been adopted by it long ago . . . The



This opinion is held not only by those interested in factories, but also by the Nationalist sections, which are studying the history of our economic relations with India. As a result, they have come to regard us primarily as the exploiters of Indian industry. We did our best to kill the cotton industry in India by prohibiting the import of Indian printed calicoes into England (1721), and India would now pay us back and would keep us out altogether, so as to re-establish her native workshops. Thus Protection is an item in the Nationalist creed, and is hankered after by some industrial interests. "Have you ever thought out the consequences of Protection on India?" I asked one of the most eminent of the Nationalist leaders in Calcutta. "No," he replied, "I simply want to get our craftsmen at work again; and so long as English stuff comes into the market that cannot be done." "Have you thought whether it would be your craftsmen or your factories that would benefit—if either

people of India ought therefore to step into the vacuum and do by voluntary Protection [Swadeshi] what the State might have achieved in an easier way by tariffs and bounties."—Presidential Address to the Indian Industrial Conference by Dewan Bahadur Ambalab S. Desai, late Chief-Justice of Baroda.



did ? ” I pursued, but he had not. Nevertheless, Nationalism and Protection are closely allied in India, just as they are closely allied in Ireland. The desire to grasp certain industrial gains all at once, blinds both movements to the injury inflicted by their proposed methods. Certain it is that whoever studies the figures I have quoted at the opening of this chapter cannot honestly assert that Free Trade conditions have kept Indian factory industries in a crippled and stagnant condition. Protected countries show no better results.

A study of Indian trade figures shows in the plainest way that Imperial Preference would damage British trade in India, and that Protection has nothing to offer to Indian manufactures. The exports from India to us were valued at £30,000,000 in 1907-8, and of this £24,000,000 consisted of tea, wheat, raw cotton, skins, seeds, rice, jute, and wool, articles upon which a preference would be valueless to India, e.g. tea, or impossible for us, e.g. cotton and jute. The exports to which it might be practicable to grant preference on our markets are of the most insignificant proportions in the sum-total of Indian trade. I need not discuss Imperial Preference,



however, in connection with India. No one talks about it there. Indeed, except amongst some of the titled and zemindar class, one does not come across the thought of Empire at all. The Indian does not care a brass button about the Empire. If he has any feeling about it at all, it is one of resentment against Dominions like Australia and South Africa, which insult his race and deny it justice.

India's sole interest in tariff questions is to keep out all goods which come from England and the rest of the world, and protect its infant industries. A scheme of Imperial Preference forced upon India would be represented as another attempt of England to retain for itself the exploitation of the country. It would be another political grievance. Nor will India benefit much by Protection. Its total import was valued at £81,000,000 (1908-9), of which £25,000,000 was cotton, £20,000,000 metals and manufactures thereof, £7,000,000 sugar; the rest is a miscellaneous import. The cotton import is largely of goods which India cannot yet make, but which it will make in due course; the metal imports are in the same position; whilst it imports leather, sugar, tobacco and a few similar things, for the sole reason that its own



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methods for producing these commodities are so antiquated and uneconomical that it must take them from outside. The advance it is making in technical education and in business methods will soon enable it to produce a far larger share of these things for itself. India, therefore, does not require Protection. It will keep the country conservative; it will add to the load borne by the poor consumers; it will hand India over more completely to the financiers and the exploiters who use Western methods. India is slowly stretching forth its hand to grasp the gains which Protection seems to offer it. When it does so, it will find that they are not in Protection's keeping, but in that of business methods, applied science, factory organisation.

All over India to-day there is a quickening interest in technical and scientific education. It may take some time to get into its proper lines of development, but there it is. It is not altogether filled with admiration for our methods. "Shall we rely upon our rulers," asked Professor T. K. Gajjar at the Surat Industrial Conference in 1907, "when, as Mr. Haldane observes, they are themselves stripped by Germany, America, and other countries which have taken the fullest advantages of the progress



of modern knowledge ? ” The impediments in the way of education are many and great, but the personal determination and the sociological tendencies working for it are exceedingly strong. Those State appointments of Directors of Industry, those Government Bureaux and Museums of Industry, those economic surveys of States, those weaving and similar public institutions, those industrial and technical exhibitions, those scientific scholarships, and, above all, those general demands for better industrial opportunities and for scientific research, which one hears about all over India, are to bear fruit.¹ I have seen some of the schools and scientific laboratories ; I have seen some of the mills ; I have met some of the “ captains of industry,” both on the manufacturing and the financial sides ; I

¹ I need not cumber my pages with details ; but to indicate the work which is being undertaken, I may refer to a Report of the Association for the Advancement of Scientific and Industrial Education of Indians (1909) which is before me. This Society was founded in 1904. It has sent some hundreds of young men abroad, and it reports upon some who have been studying the manufacture of porcelain, lead pencils, candles, matches, buttons, leather, printing inks, umbrellas. Others have been studying chemical processes such as dyeing and perfumery. An Agricultural Settlement has been established, Indian banking promoted, a small Industries Development Company started.



have noted when speaking to some of the most devoted national leaders a decided reaction against a literary education; and I have come away convinced that the industrial future of India is assured, and that one of the great dangers ahead—a danger which I think some of the sympathetic administrators I met are inclined to minimise—is an individualism far less controlled than ours was a century ago, armed with opportunities of exploitation far more dangerous than ours ever were, productive, in consequence, of evils to the people far more dire than any which we have known.

I have referred to Swadeshi and the hand worker, and I return to it to repeat that Swadeshi is not going to carry India very far. As a sentiment it is excellent; as an industrial policy its limits of usefulness are exceedingly circumscribed. It is true that Swadeshi has done something for technical education, and that it has tried to encourage some branches of hand-work. But, however offensive the thought may be to the good Nationalist, the Indian Swadeshi movement is imbued with Western notions of profit, factories, balance of trade. One has only to read the presidential addresses at the annual Indian Industrial Conferences to see that. The President at Surat, for



instance, boasted that fifteen private banks, five navigation companies, twenty-two new cotton mills, two jute mills, and so on, had been set on foot by Swadeshi. The Swadeshi which this gentleman voiced was one which would enable him and his class to create an efficient machinery for the exploitation of the poor wage earner without let or hindrance by the Government. Many Indians curse Lancashire solely because they want the powers of exploitation for themselves which they imagine Lancashire to possess through the British Government. The Pathan has become a money-lender in Calcutta, the Hindu is thinking of ledger balances with an itching palm. The new India of commerce is growing visibly before our eyes.



IV

THE LAND OF THE POVERTY-
STRICKEN

A TOUR in India is a study in violent contrasts. Ruler and subject, riches and poverty, jewels and nakedness, fatness and leanness, exist cheek by jowl in this wonderful land, and there is little transitional shading to soften the line separating one from the other. They parade arm-in-arm before you. Each is absolute. It is as though the sun suddenly shot up from below the horizon to the zenith in a moment and blazed upon you dazzling beams, and then the next shot down into night, leaving you in bewildering, murky darkness. The darkness, however, sometimes appears to be everlasting. For days and days one goes through the land and sees nothing but thin bodies toiling, toiling, toiling, trudging, trudging, trudging; or pinched bodies worshipping, worshipping, worshipping with a sadness that one sees in no other temples. India is the home of the poverty-stricken.



And this was borne in upon me all the more that its poverty was embodied in forms of the most perfect human grace. The woman coming from the well with her pitcher on her head; the mother with her baby astraddle across her thigh; the cultivator behind his plough and oxen; the man walking on the road, in pose and demeanour are as perfect as if they were the models of the best Greek sculptors.

To ascertain how wealth is being distributed in India is one of the most difficult of tasks. Until but yesterday, India was a land of agriculturists, where the arts and crafts were pursued by methods familiar for centuries. Each community of cultivators had its complement of service givers, its barber and potter, its weaver and washerman, its blacksmith and money-lender; and they all depended for a livelihood on the fruitfulness of nature. When that was bountiful all flourished; when that failed all languished and starved. They had their little stores in reserve, but there was no living on averages, no capitalist accumulation. They depended in the main on the season; the source of their supplies was limited to their own neighbourhood; their market was equally circumscribed. They discharged their obligations in most things



not at any absolute price, but in proportions of crop yieldings. Their social economy was mutual and elastic. Thus they bore heavy burdens, because in their economy the art of adjustment was brought to perfection, and in their hearts was a resignation to the decrees of Fate.

But two great changes have come over them. Their obligations are ceasing to be relative and have to be discharged at average prices, and their market on the one hand, and source of supply on the other, have become the world and are no longer in their village.

Their heaviest obligations are to the Government, and the weight of taxation is blamed for the poverty of the people. We take in Land Revenue £20,000,000 per annum, £3,000,000 from salt, £11,000,000 from Customs and Excise, and have a net income of a little under £50,000,000 and a gross one of over £70,000,000. On the other side of the account we spend on Army and military works, not including strategic (*sic*) railways, a sum which is just short of £20,000,000 ; it costs £6,000,000 to collect the revenue, and we spend about £19,000,000 in England, not including the cost of stores for Railway and Irrigation Works.

The Revenue works out at a tax of 3s. 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.



per head of the population. This seems small, particularly when it is remembered that 1s. 8d. of the sum comes from the land revenue, which is not a tax but a rent. We must not be misled into an unwarrantable optimism, however, by these figures. For the burden of taxation is measured not by its absolute amount, but by its ratio to income. For instance, our burden at home is about £3 per head; our income £40 per head. The burden upon the British Indian is 3s. 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per head—or, deducting the land revenue, 1s. 10 $\frac{2}{3}$ d. per head—whilst his average annual income is not more than £2.¹

I think that it would be upon expenditure that an impartial critic would fix his attention. Financial authorities of a country not responsible to public opinion, not in any way depending upon the consent of the taxpayers for office, must be more subject to the vice of extravagance than similar authorities who cannot forget that taxpayers are electors. This is fundamental.

The personal extravagance of our rulers and officials can be seen by the eye. Simla

¹ Although I write thus I must again warn readers against the fallacy of averages in Indian revenue discussions. For instance, the land revenue of 1s. 8d. per head is most unevenly distributed between, say, Bengal and the Punjab, and whole sections of the community have an income of far less than £2 per head.



residents are able to point out several examples of this as regards the houses of officials. I am thinking of a very gross case as I write. It was paid for by the people of India; it was unnecessary, and the result of personal whims, and it was not subject to a proper independent audit carried out by an official in the position of our Controller and Auditor-General. The first step necessary to put Indian expenditure on a sound footing is the appointment of an Auditor-General who will be directly responsible to the India Office or, better still, to the House of Commons itself. This would also put an end to that only too common experience in India of sanctioned expenditure on works being greatly exceeded without even fresh approval by the Government. It would also mean that information of a fulness sufficient to be of use would be placed before the House of Commons itself—something after the style of our Public Accounts Committee Reports. It may be that the Viceroy requires two establishments at Simla; it may be that Lieutenant-Governors require to move trees from one corner of their residences to another at great expense; it may be that railway engineers cannot estimate costs within ten or twelve lakhs of rupees; it may be that roads to private houses have



to be built almost literally of rupees, but the House of Commons might as well know about these things—even if Akbar did indulge in them in his time without having to consult any one. When there is no personal extravagance, every Englishman employed to do work for which an Indian is fitted is a burden upon the Indian taxpayer.¹

There is also the old grievance about the cost of the Army. In 1885 a change took place in our frontier policy, and in that year Lord Ripon left. Then began the epoch of bombastic Imperialism at the expense of India. The Finance Minister of that day objected, but military expenditure was increased at a bound by 1,600,000 rupees per annum. The cost of annexing Upper Burma was similarly placed on Indian shoulders, and no justification ever has, or ever can be, offered for it. It is unspeakably mean of us to place this burden on the Indian's back simply because he must bear any load we put upon him. Nine-tenths of the charge of the Army in India is an Imperial charge. Canada, South Africa, and Australia should bear it as much as India.

¹ Sir William Hunter's opinion on this point was: "If we are to govern the Indian people efficiently and cheaply we must govern them by means of themselves."



It is a piece of the most bitter cynicism to find the Imperial doors of our colonies shut in the faces of these poor people, who bear such an inordinate share of the cost of Imperial maintenance, and at whose expense these Dominions are protected from the fear of war. If £18,000,000 of the Army charges were met by the whole Empire we might look the Indian taxpayer in the face as honest men. At present we cannot do so.

I have found myself unable to feel much wrath about what is called "the drain." In so far as it is caused by our undoubtedly expensive administration, it should be stopped. Of the 2,400 offices in India carrying salaries of over £800 only 70 are held by Indians. £5,000,000 per annum seems to be the extent of this extravagance, but it is exceedingly difficult to get very accurate details to go upon. The payments in the form of interest on debt (so far as the debt has been incurred for Indian purposes), on loans for public works, on other capital provided in England, are legitimate. We have borrowed for India more cheaply than India itself could have done. Moreover, if the loans have come from London, that is owing to the unwillingness of Indians themselves to place capital at the disposal of industrial enterprise. This weak-



ness is emphasised at every industrial conference held in India; but as Indians are now coming forward to support banking and other financial undertakings, the day of excessive borrowings in England may be assumed to be over. This complaint is not confined to India. In Australia I have heard grumbling that English capital spent in the development of Australia should claim Australian dividends! The complaint is unjust and does not reflect credit upon those who make it. The fact is, however, that India—if it is to embark upon Western industrial ways and seek goals to which these ways lead—will still be benefited by some English capital, though, if it could be induced to provide its own that would be an advantage. That cannot be done as yet.

On the other hand, a little over a million and a half pounds spent on education¹ is ridiculous. The small State of Baroda, with a population of 2,000,000 souls, spends £660,000 on this, and has committed itself to a policy which will soon cost £1,000,000 per annum. Moreover, so patent has been

¹ The total expenditure is £4,000,000, of which £1,000,000 comes from school fees, and the remainder from charity, local exchequers, etc. In Baroda, education has been compulsory since 1904-5, an experiment having been carried on in one Taluka since 1893, and the law is being gradually carried into full force.



our failure to make this expenditure efficient, that perhaps the most melancholy official publication in India is the *Quinquennial Report on Educational Progress*. To this day, 90 per cent of the males and 99 per cent of the females in India are illiterate.

Our expenditure on education, however, is only typical. We spend far too much of the income of India on Imperial purposes and far too little on Indian development; far too much on machinery and far too little on the conditions in conjunction with which the machinery must be run.

On the whole, I think two charges can be substantiated against us. Our Government is extravagant, and we have behaved meanly to India. We charge the Indian taxpayer with the cost of the India Office in Whitehall—even with the cost of building it: we would never think of making such a charge against our Colonies; India has to pay for Aden and for Imperial Embassies into different parts of Asia; but the depth of meanness was surely touched when we tried—happily unsuccessfully—to charge India with £7,000, the cost of the representatives and guests from India who took part in the coronation ceremonies of the late King.

A dispute of a fury equal to that on the



amount of taxation has been raised as to the method of levying the taxes. Is the land revenue fairly imposed? Is what is called the "Permanent Settlement" the only just method of raising this tax, or is there justice as well as money in the method of periodic revaluation and readjustment of the tax?¹

The Permanent Settlement of Bengal was accomplished in 1793, when a class of landlords was recognised and the land revenue fixed. The arrangement thus made is that the cultivator shall pay rent to a landlord, and that the landlord shall pay a certain percentage of that rent to the State.² In its earlier years, the Nationalist movement, both in India and at home, was Liberal in its economics as well as in its politics, and a scheme of Permanent Settlement was in the forefront of the political proposals made to alleviate the distress of the cultivator. In one of his latest books,³ Mr. Romesh Dutt marshals

¹ The Permanent Settlement area in 1906-7 was 122,000,000 acres, yielding $4\frac{1}{2}$ crores of rupees to the Exchequer. The temporarily settled area was 203,000,000 acres, yielding $14\frac{1}{2}$ crores.

² This revenue now represents only 8 per cent of the produce of the land, the rest of the economic rent being private property.

³ *Famines in India*.



the arguments favourable to the Bengal system. Under it improvements are encouraged because the Government cannot step in and claim, in the shape of enhanced revenue, the benefits which follow upon improvements. The system of a frequent valuation of fields for the purpose of ascertaining whether their value is going up or down, and of increasing their revenue if the former is taking place, tends to keep the cultivator from advancing with the times, because he receives no permanent reward for his energy: The Government takes everything; the cultivator gets nothing. For a long time this was the view of the Indian reformer, and it was a view in accord with prevailing Liberal ideas of the West, which did not discriminate between rent and other forms of income.

It is altogether unsound, however, because it is based upon a misconception of the nature of economic rent. The landlord is an essential feature of the Bengal system, and if the Bengal cultivator pays no revenue he pays rent. By precisely the same causes which raise the amounts of revenue to be paid under temporary assessment, the Bengal cultivator found he had to pay increased rents to the zemindar. In other words, economic rent is not available for



the tenant cultivator. It does not remain in his pocket. If he be a cultivating owner, so soon as the economic rent of his holding becomes of any value, he lets his land to another and takes the rent without putting himself to the trouble of cultivating by his own labour and capital. Whatever the system may be, economic rent always tends to separate itself from wages and interest, and to become the subject of independent holding and an opportunity for exaction. Thus we find that in Bengal the tenant was rack-rented because the Government had not claimed the whole of the economic rent. A class of zemindar landlords grew up who used their economic powers to take more than was economically just, and the tenant had to be protected by a special code of law known as the Bengal Tenancy Acts (1859 to 1885). Similar Land Laws have had to be passed in the United Provinces and the Punjab, Madras, Bombay, Burma, and Assam to meet similar circumstances, and petty occupiers are being turned into proprietors (practically, if not nominally), and are protected against an increase of revenue on their own improvements. The Bengal Acts restore to the cultivator his ancient right to security (provided he pays his rent), which had



practically disappeared by 1858 owing to the operation of the landlord system. They lay down the process by which his rent can be increased, and endow him with rights of occupancy which amount to a system of dual ownership. But even now the system is uncertain and inequitable. The public, represented by the Government, do not get a fair share in the socially created increments, and the cultivators secure a part of economic rent in varying proportions, and not in accordance with their deserts. An enormously wealthy class of zemindars has been created, and the custom of official bleeding by offering them C.I.E.'s and other decorations for subscriptions to the hobbies of Collectors and Lieutenant-Governors has grown up as a substitute for the more direct way of obtaining public revenue by a land assessment. The system of Permanent Settlement has nothing either in theory or practice to commend it, and even where supplemented by Tenancy Acts it is clumsy, and is a poor substitute for the Bombay system.

The Bombay system is one of periodical valuation of lands with a view to a re-adjustment of burdens, so as to keep them in some steady ratio to economic rent. When the price of produce rises more than



the cost of cultivation, economic rent also rises; when land becomes more valuable owing to the building of railways or expenditure on irrigation works, economic rent rises. Under such circumstances the revenue paid by land to the Government should also rise, because the land tax is not a tax but a rent. In the adjustment of revenue, of course, the greatest care must be taken not to confuse interest on capital expenditure with rent—for instance, all the benefit of irrigation or manuring must not be regarded as rent, because much of it is interest; and again, care must be taken not to increase the land revenue so suddenly that it seriously affects the standard of life of the cultivator. Thus, short settlements may be more just to the cultivator than long ones, although at a first glance they seem more oppressive. But those are details the settlement of which must depend on the ability and honesty of officers and the financial genius of Governments. The principle underlying the Bombay system, that rent is largely an unearned increment, that the land revenue is not a tax on private wealth in the proper sense, but the property of the public from its very origin, is one which ought to be accepted unhesitatingly by every collectivist



critic of Indian administration.¹ In doing so I take my stand against one of the oldest contentions of the Indian school of Reformers; but this is only one of several points upon which the modern school must disagree with the older one.

Whether or not this good principle has been oppressively applied is a totally different question which has given rise to a voluminous literature, and the problem has been greatly complicated by considerations regarding how the money has been spent: whether the Indian Army ought to be an Imperial charge, whether the European service in India constitutes a drain on Indian resources, and so on.

But for the moment confining my attention to the impost itself, the balance of evidence and official admission seems to be that in many places the impost has been too heavy, and that the wages and interest of the cultivator have frequently

¹ I have frequently noticed that in the Indian press it is argued that the land tax is not a rent, because it is not fixed by competition. It is providential for India that it is not, for if the Government put up lands to auction so as to impose rents, its income would be much higher, because competing tenants would do themselves greater injury than they meet with at the hands of collectors. An expert valuation is a better way of fixing a just economic rent than competition between would-be users.



been drawn upon by the Government in addition to economic rent. If we assume that the volume by Mr. Dutt to which I have just referred is an authoritative statement of one view, and the reply which Lord Curzon caused to be published¹ is the authoritative statement of the official view, the careful critic who has studied both will probably finish his task with some such conclusions as follow. He will agree that in many details—most of them, however, quite unessential to the main charges—Mr. Dutt has made mistakes, and he will reject as of no value all statements as to averages made by both sides—but particularly by the officials—on the ground that averages, taken over such a wide field, and covering values the smallest variation in which means a great deal in proportion to the total effective income of the people concerned, must be quite worthless for practical purposes. He will consequently regret that the Government of India has never accepted the challenge thrown out by its critics to institute a careful investigation into the social conditions of groups of typical villages on the plan adopted by Mr. Charles Booth

¹ *Land Revenue Policy of the Indian Government*. Calcutta, 1902.



and Mr. Rowntree, because in that way alone can real evidence be placed before impartial judges.

He will also, I think, find grounds for believing that, partly owing to readjustments and partly owing to changes in Indian social economy, the burden of land revenue is less than it was.¹ Things are improving. The extension of the cultivable area and the increasing value and regularity² of the crops raised have undoubtedly increased the economic rent of India, and thereby lightened the burdens of the land tax; whilst the agitation of which I have taken Mr. Dutt as the representative has had its effect upon the official mind. Even those officials whom I would unhesitatingly regard as the least sympathetic and most ignorant of Indian thought and feeling spoke of the possibility of an increase of land revenue with a terrified shudder, whilst the best men readily admitted that excesses had been imposed, that the cultivators had been

¹ The assessments in 1878-9 amounted to 22 crores of rupees, in 1905-6 to 29 crores. This represents an increased value of products from 300 crores to 400 crores, which is much under the actual increase.—*Journal of Royal Statistical Society*, September 1909, p. 555.

² I write this in spite of recent famines, because the steps that have been taken to make the people independent of the seasons have undoubtedly been effective.



driven into the clutches of money-lenders in consequence, and that the greatest care should be taken to leave the cultivators an ampler margin than they now have for an improvement in their standard of life.

But the conclusion of farther reaching importance than any of the others has reference to the use of averages. In the official defence, an assumption, very reasonable under Western conditions, but fatal to good results under Indian conditions, is made. Assessments are fixed on average years. In good years the full economic rent is not taken; in bad years a little more than the economic rent is taken; averaging the two, justice is done. Here is the West blundering in the East. The Indian cultivator does not think, and does not organise his economy, in periods longer than a season or annual round of seasons. He is not a capitalist who accumulates and averages. One year he has, the next year he has not. Even when he has hoardings in the shape of ornaments he does not regard them as mere coin. They are like family jewellery, and will not be disposed of except on a great pinch. He borrows rather than convert these ornaments into cash. Hence in bad years he often pays his land assessment from borrowed money, upon which he



has to pay 25 to 30 per cent. Thus it is that fixed charges have driven the cultivator steadily into the hands of the usurer. It is not that the charges have been always excessive of themselves. They have not been sufficiently elastic to meet the short views which have been characteristic of Indian economy from time immemorial; they have been too rigid to fit into his habit of meeting his obligations by sharing his crops.¹ Averages, erroneous everywhere, are more fruitful of mistakes in India than elsewhere; obligations calculated on capitalist habits can never be anything but oppressive when imposed on communities where payments have been almost directly made in kind, and where the measure of economic obligation has been a season's crop.

In this respect India is now changing. The factory, with its demand for wage workers and its drain upon agricultural labourers; the export of corn, with its tendency to establish cash payments instead of kind exchanges or barter, have already seriously affected the old economy of India, the recent rise in prices being only an

¹ "The rigidity of the revenue system forces them into debt."—MacDonnell, *Famine Commission Report* (1910), par. 331.



indication of more radical changes. But before the change began, and whilst the transition time lasts, the Western methods of imposing averaged burdens are bound to work considerable havoc and to result in much injustice.

If one feels more bewilderment than enlightenment in plunging through the mass of assertion and counter-assertion that has been made during this controversy, the great outstanding and ultimate facts unfortunately admit of no dispute. They are confessed in every official publication. The people are the most industrious in the world; much of their land is fertile and yields rich crops; whenever a famine comes they are stricken with starvation and die by the thousand, whilst millions are shattered in physical vigour. Sir William Hunter said that 40,000,000 Indians go through life with insufficient food; Sir Charles Elliott estimated that one-half of the agricultural population never satisfied hunger fully from one year's end to another. From thirty to fifty million families live in India on an income which does not exceed $3\frac{1}{2}d.$ per day. In July 1900, according to the *Imperial Gazetteer*, famine relief was administered daily to 6,500,000 persons. The poverty of India is not an opinion, it is a



fact. At the best of times the cultivator has a millstone of debt about his neck. The Famine Commission's Report of 1901 informs us that at least one-fourth of the cultivators in the Bombay Presidency have lost their lands and less than one-fifth are free from debt. When it is remembered that on his borrowings the cultivator pays interest at the rate of 30 per cent per annum, it is easily seen that anything—whether his own extravagance or the rigidity of collection of Government taxes—which drives him to the money-lender is like a sentence of economic death upon him. But, again, one must be warned that the district variations are considerable. One can gather that by the eye in passing from place to place. The cultivator of Oudh, living under a system of landlordism pure and simple, is a very much more pitiable sight than the cultivator in Central Bengal or in the Punjab.

In this connection one must consider specifically the problem presented by famine. A careful study of the material available does not support the view that famine is becoming more prevalent. It is undoubtedly better advertised. Every locality is now under the eye of Government and the newspapers, and people suffer less in obscurity than they did. Moreover, the bulk of



scientific opinion seems to be opposed to the somewhat widely spread notion that the climate is changing and that the rainfall is becoming less regular, although the destruction of forests, and other short-sighted interferences with the natural drainage of the country for which we are responsible, must have altered the distribution of moisture in the soil. Carelessly constructed railway embankments blocking drainage channels have turned healthy places into malaria-infested districts; and although the miracles worked by our systems of irrigation must strike every observer, we do not yet know what penalty nature is to impose upon us for them. Our "improvements" have altered the natural economy of India to an extent which we can only guess about at present. All this must affect the general fertility of the country.

A mere recital of recent famine statistics is enough to appal one. Going no further back than 1890 we find that in that year there was scarcity in several districts, and in the following year the affected area was wider. In 1896-7 there was famine in Madras, Southern and Central Bombay, Bengal, United Provinces, Central Provinces, and the south-eastern corner of the Punjab, whilst the Native States of Rajputana and



Hyderabad also suffered. Scarcity was felt in certain fringing areas. Again in 1899-1900 famine visited Bombay, the Central Provinces, Rajputana, Baroda, Hyderabad, and scarcity accompanied it in neighbouring districts. Almost continuously from that time to last year there have been short crops in most parts of India, scarcity in the Deccan and parts of the Central Provinces, and famine in Guzarat. In 1907 drought again played havoc in Northern India. In the 1896-7 famine 307,000 square miles were affected, with a population of 69,500,000. The figures for British India alone were 225,000 square miles and 62,500,000 people, of whom 4,000,000 were on relief at the height of the distress. In British India the mortality of this famine has been estimated officially at 750,000 souls.¹ The famine which followed on the heels of this affected an area of 475,000 square miles bearing a population of 59,500,000, of whom 6,500,000 were receiving daily relief at one time. The British territory affected was 180,000 square miles, with a population of 26,000,000. The Commission which reported upon this estimated that in British India about a million people had died as the result of this infliction and the cholera which trod upon its heels.

¹ *Imperial Gazetteer*, new edition, 1907, vol. iii., p. 490-91.



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In studying famine, one must begin by grasping what it is and how it presents itself. Even in the worst times now there is no scarcity of grain in the famine-stricken districts, except, as in the case of Darbhanga in 1906-7, when the famine was caused by floods which cut off the afflicted district from the rest of India in the early stage of the outbreak. At the very worst time in the Guzarat famine of 1900, when people were dying by the score every day in Ahmedabad, it was shown by the official returns that there was "sufficient grain to last for a couple of years" in the hands of the grain dealers of the district. It is, therefore, not a scarcity of grain that causes famine. As a rule, prices rise, but not to the level they used to reach. The railways have stopped that. Imports supply failure of crops. The last serious scarcity of grain was experienced in the Orissa famine in 1865-7, and that which followed in Rajputana in 1868-70. Since then famine has been caused by a destruction of capital and the consequent cessation of the demand for labour. High prices coincide with low wages and unemployment, and people starve in the midst of plenty.¹ Hence, the first

¹ As guides to the formation of accurate opinions regarding famines, I may quote some sentences from the



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to suffer are the landless labourers who have no savings, no credit, and nothing to mortgage. The advantage they have is that they are pretty free to move about and are not prevented by pride or caste from accepting any relief that may be going. Little removed from them are the small cultivators. They are generally in the hands of the money-lender, who is unwilling to advance them more money; they have no reserve of grain, so that they have to purchase the high-priced food-stuffs on the market; they are unwilling to go away in search of work. The advantage they have is that they may obtain from the Government some loan to dig wells.¹ Then the high prices reduce the

Report on the Administration of Famine Relief in the United Provinces during the Years 1907-8. Prices rose rapidly in the second week in January, and imports from the Punjab and elsewhere came in at the rate of 50,000 tons a week (p. 27). Estimate that the cultivator in 1908 lost £23,000,000 worth of food crops (p. 33). Trade in food-stuffs active during famine, and private enterprise provided sufficient supply for market (p. 122). Difficulty is high prices, not scarcity (p. 124). If prices had been as low as they were thirty years before, there would have been no need for relief over the greater part of the area (p. 151). The labourer who spent one and a half annas on food in 1906 had to spend two annas for the same amount in the autumn of 1907 (p. 152).

¹ Of the male diggers employed on the relief works in the Sadar charge there were twice as many cultivators



value of the rupee, and the middle-classes suffer severely in consequence. This increases the indebtedness of the people, and in famine times extra staffs have sometimes to be engaged to cope with the rush of applications for registration of deeds.¹

In one way railways have added to the difficulty, and have widened the apparent famine area. They are, in the first place, the means by which the export of Indian grain is carried on. No one who has not been in India and has seen nothing of the working of the system from the great granaries at Kurachee to the agencies in every little village which has a surplus of anything that can be sent away, can grasp the colossal nature of this export organisation. One firm alone sucks the sap of Indian life like a tropical sun, leaving dust and barrenness behind. A week or two after harvest India's surplus wheat and rice have passed into the hands of dealers, and when the next monsoon fails she starves. The cultivator used to have reserves. He has practically none now. He

as landless labourers, and of these cultivators 12 per cent possessed holdings of 4 bighas [about an acre] and upwards. *Darbhanga Famine Report*, 1906-7, p. 10.

¹ *Ibid.* p. 11, where it is stated that the increase in registrations was 53 per cent.



has a little money but not much of it, and it is just this turning everything into cash which is the source of so much of his troubles. When in the old time famine overtook India, if the famine-stricken tract was in dire distress, neighbouring tracts were little affected, owing to the lack of communication preventing famine influences from affecting neighbouring markets. Nowadays the means which relieve famine widen its influences, because scarcity in one part immediately puts up prices in other parts and deepens poverty in them. The poison which used to be virulent and local is now milder but is carried farther through the system.

I am fully aware that on this point there is official optimism, and that a reply is at hand in the shape of the statistics of export. The charge is that India is depleted after her harvests. The reply made is that when India's harvests fail exports drop. Of course they must. It is not the figures of export that have a bearing on this point but those of import, and we find these rise enormously, and immediately there is scarcity. For instance, in the *Review of the Trade of India for 1908-9*¹ it is stated regarding the import of grain and pulse, "The trade temporarily assumed im-

¹ Cd. 4912.



portant dimensions last year in consequence of the scarcity prevailing in parts of the country." The import of rice in 1907-8 was 3,718 tons, in 1908-9 32,739; of wheat 12,783 and 28,948 respectively. This shows that India is depleted every season, and other figures show that when prices rise savings are destroyed. No reason for official optimism is less well furnished than that based upon the growing exports of Indian grain.

These changes in Indian economy, it is said, have to come because they are incidents in the path of progress. That is only the *obiter dictum* of our Western arrogance and blindness. We live under the delusion that there is no emancipation except through the disintegration of social organisation. In the old days there was an organisation which made the interdependence of the various functions in social life real. Exchange was in the first place internal to the community. There was a common wealth. The despised money-lender was a necessary social functionary. Now that is broken up. The individual cultivator has been dragged into wide relationships. He gets price for his products and he pays his obligations in coin. The economic community is broken up. Ex-



change of service has given place to purchase of service. Produce is taken away and the price of it remains, and this price is subject to many fluctuations in value to which the produce under the vanishing economic conditions was not subject. The money-lender from being a social functionary has become a parasite. Individual capitalism is proving itself to be even more destructive of the best that is in India—where its operations are alien to the civilisation of the country—than it has proved to be in the West, where it has not been so alien. The ways of Western progress are not the ways of Eastern progress. It is simply absurd for us to look complacently on and see the ancient methods of credit upset, the ancient protections from famine swept away, and the ancient balance and economy destroyed ; and rejoice that through this ruin, progress comes.

And what are we putting in the place of them ? Railways are of little use. Even their benefit depends on the answer we give to the conundrum whether it is better to have severe famine in limited districts, or an increase of prices and an increased poverty over wide areas round a stricken centre where the famine may be less severe than it would otherwise be. This happens



in the process of substituting the cash nexus for the personal nexus, of enthroning the pinchbeck virtues of egotistic and capitalist thrift in the place of a ruined system of social thrift, mutual aid, and personal credit. We have made the money-lender and the grain forestaller great, and from being public functionaries our administration has made them self-seeking exploiters.

In the strenuousness of their efforts to provide relief when famine is upon the land, our officers are above praise. The story of famine relief in India will shine with a bright glow after many other achievements of ours have ceased to emit a beam of light. I have heard detailed criticisms regarding the expenditure of the funds; and sometimes overworked and overworried officials have failed to be tactful or even polite. Thus, it is stated in the Report of the Orphan movement in connection with the Arya Somaj (1899-1900), that during the famine of that year whilst rescuing orphans in Rajputana, "we addressed representations, memorials, and applications to the Commissioner of Ajmere-Merwara, to the Agent of the Governor-General of Rajputana, and to the Deputy Commissioner of Beawar, but our applications never elicited any replies." But what of that? Man is not



yet perfect. And yet their relief work, so unlike the charity which India has been accustomed to dispense, has of itself had a solvent effect on Indian social organisation. It tended to pauperise the people, to make them lose their self-respect; it damaged the status of some, it destroyed the morals of others. Indeed, the coarsening and degrading which come from relief works and labour tests are just the same in India as they are at home.¹

Also payment of relief in coin tends to keep up the price of corn and allows the grain dealer to exact more than he otherwise would from the people. He has first of all the advantage of taking the corn of his creditors—often at his own price—and then of having a market for it prepared by the Government through relief works. In some of the recent famines doles have been given in grain by the Government and not in coin. This is an improvement on old methods, and indicates that the force of circumstances is driving the Government to relieve in kind, and thus to tackle the question of grain storage.

Over and over again Government has

¹ Relief work in India is generally the making of new roads, and the repair of old ones, of embankments and of tanks, and the excavation of new tanks.



been warned that its duty is not to relieve, but to prevent, and that the only way to prevent is to strengthen the economic position of the cultivator mainly by extricating him from the financial meshes in which he lives, and to give support, so far as is possible, to the old economy by encouraging its methods of mutual helpfulness. When scarcity comes and prices reach famine levels the Indian administration should boldly step in and prevent, where necessary, exporters and forestallers leaving the land more desolate than need be. Maximum prices for grains should be fixed, and not a ton should be allowed to leave the country except by the sanction of Government. A steadying of prices is by far and away the best kind of famine relief that a Government can establish in India. This would not interfere with legitimate exports or ordinary trade ; it would prevent the whole economy of India being dominated by the interests of usurers and exporters, who act as exploiters of the country and its people.

If the controversy regarding land assessments and famines is entering upon a new phase owing to the changing social economy of the country, we must consider what that change means, with a view to guiding it as far as possible in the interests of the people.



To the eye, the change is noticeable in smoking factories, crowded coolie quarters, extending docks; but some of its less prominent features are not the least important.

The movement in co-operation, best illustrated by the agricultural banks, is one of the most significant. These banks, advocated in a memorandum sent by Sir William Wedderburn to the Government of Bombay and accepted by the Government of India in 1884, but rejected by the Secretary of State—Lord Wolverhampton, then Mr. Henry Fowler—were begun in 1904, and at the present moment are to be found in every province in a state of more or less vigour. Twenty valuable years have been lost, however, and the poverty of the cultivator is so much deeper.¹ Thus passes the

¹ These Societies are now passing out of their experimental stage. The Hon. R. W. Carlyle, who presided at the twentieth Annual Conference of Co-operative Credit Societies at Calcutta in November 1909, stated that during the year the number of Societies had risen from 1,357 to 2,008, the members from 149,160 to 184,897, the working capital from 44 lakhs to 81 lakhs, the expenditure from 47 lakhs to 84 lakhs. In Madras, Burma, and the United Provinces they can command as much capital as they require; in Bengal and the Punjab the Societies are most numerous, though in the United Provinces the membership and the working capital are both largest. Repayments are excellent, fraud is slight, liquidation is rare. This system of mutual credit is to be extended. Weavers' Banks have just been started. The danger



old cultivator. Thus the regularity and organisation and forethought of the West arrive, and the social and economic habits of thrift and averaging, upon which alone a democratically controlled Government rests, are creeping in. A Delhi Mogul or a Poona Peshwa could rule on fluctuating incomes; a Calcutta Cabinet needs something very regular and very certain. The error and injustice of averages are being minimised. India is systematising her expenditure and her consumption.

As part of this silent revolution this also is happening. All the guide-books tell the traveller that India is a cheap country, but he does not find it to be so. Prices have risen enormously. Wages, tips, hotel bills, are all on an ascending scale. I quote the following table from the *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* for September 1909, showing the increase in the cost of living in India through sixty years :

Years.	Price Index Number				
1843-58	..	..	..	..	72
1865-87	..	..	..	..	100
1889-98	..	..	..	..	118
1900-4	..	..	..	..	125
1905 to date	..	..	..	..	135

ahead is that too much haste will be shown in founding them, as was the case in the native State of Mysore, but this danger diminishes every year.



The figures for the past three years are :

Years.							Price
							Index Number
1906	..	..	..	..	..	..	167
1907	..	..	..	..	..	..	178
1908	..	..	..	..	..	..	202

Much is being written about this and very much more talked about it. Commissions and Committees are being demanded to inquire into it. Some say it is caused by exports, some by imports, some by factories, some by tourists, some by the changes which have been made in the value of the rupee, some by the excessive coining in which Sir Edward Baker is, in some quarters, alleged to have indulged when he was Finance Minister, some by famines and scarcity, some by railways, some by the "cornering" of dealers. The real truth is probably that it is owing to them all together, because they are all part of the organic change creeping over India. This view receives support from the fact that since 1860 not only have prices been rising steadily but local variations have been ceasing to count, and except at exceptional times have tended to become uniform all over India.

India is undergoing expansion, factories are arising, the area of cultivation is widen-



ing, opportunities for work are multiplying, and the increase in population has been checked by famine, disease, and scarcity.¹ Moreover, the old method of exchange is being supplanted by a new one, in which money is being used. The blacksmith and barber, as I have pointed out, are to a less extent village functionaries sharing in village production and village wealth, and are becoming personal servants, charging fees for their services. Thus, impediments have been put in the way of a free exchange of labour, inducements have had to be offered, and consequently competition and the laws of supply and demand have come into operation; prices on the world's market have influenced prices in India.

This is to be permanent. The operations of agricultural banks, if they were only carried on on a larger scale, would tend to destroy the power of the bania or money-lender, who, holding liens very commonly on crops, is in a specially advantageous position for cornering markets and keeping up prices against the consumer. But costs in exchange are to increase as coinage is to

¹ The Census increase between 1881 and 1891 was 13·18 per cent, between 1891 and 1901 2·41 per cent; since 1901 there has been scarcity, famine, and much disease.



be more and more used for measuring the value of services, and as Western industrial methods obtain a firmer grip on Indian industry.

This is affecting the economic position of the classes in India and will be a disrupting element in its social organisation. For instance, all those working for fixed salaries or fees, all traders carrying on business in old ways, and the middle classes who do not engage in trade, are becoming relatively poorer. The business man who adopts new methods, and who is fitting himself into the mechanism of the export trade, is becoming richer. His origin is very often in one of the lower castes, and the higher castes look on his rise with disgust. The cultivator is in a more doubtful position. If he is cultivating for export he gets better prices than he used to do—though it must be observed that the lion's share of the benefits goes to the middleman; but when he has to buy for consumption, he finds that his high income has a low equivalent in terms of necessities of life. The cultivator who tills irrigated land in exporting districts and whose tenancy is of considerable size, is undoubtedly improving his status and is hoarding wealth; the class cultivating small holdings from which no advantage of export



can be reaped is either stationary or is being ground down. In Bengal there is a specially wealthy landlord class, and this class is getting richer and richer. There still remains the landless labourer, and on the whole he seems to be improving. He finds it more difficult to live when out of work, but when in work—and there are still thousands of small jobs to which he can turn his hand—his higher wages more than compensate him for dearer goods. And to all and sundry who care to enter the mills there is some opening as yet. The distance which workpeople go for factory labour is extraordinary. In a jute mill which we visited outside Calcutta, for instance, we were shown a big block of two-storeyed dwellings inhabited mainly by coolies from Madras. Further, in estimating the tendencies in wealth distribution, we must not overlook the changes in social habit which are creeping over the people and changing the values of incomes. Better clothes are being worn, cigarettes are beginning to take the place of the hookah, alcohol is being more widely consumed, shoes are more general, umbrellas are becoming more common. The people's wants—too many of them debased—are becoming more costly to meet. As evidences of increased pros-



perity I place little reliance upon such facts. These things no more show prosperity than expensive weddings or extravagant funerals. They simply show that the people are running after cheap luxuries, that their sources of satisfaction are changing, that they are spending more money upon themselves.

Thus the general conclusion to which I have come regarding the movement of wealth in India is that India is rapidly becoming richer as a whole; that a comparatively small but exceedingly rich class is being formed of bankers, mill-owners, and landlords, the majority of whom are Hindus of the merchant castes but with a strong representation of Parsees, Jains, and other special sections of the Indian community; that economic rent is increasing; that the aristocracy and members of the old trading and middle class are being reduced; that the cultivator is being divided, and at one end is becoming better to do, at the other worse off; that the industrial population which either has land but supplements its income in factories, or has no land at all and has to live solely on wages, is, for the time being, slightly improving its position, but is gradually drifting into the same position as the



European industrial population ; that, after an interval when the demand for labour will be not less than the supply, and when an appreciable percentage of the labour employed in the mills will be independent because it has other sources of income—in this case the land—the labourer will find himself in a weaker position, and will be protected only by such trade combinations as he can in the meantime create. These combinations will probably be of a kind midway between the castes of India and the trade unions of Great Britain.

Thus, the great transformation deliberately desired and striven for by the Western minds who have been squeezing India into Western moulds comes upon India—certainly not for its final benefit.



V

AWAKENING INDIA

At the beginning of the century a breath of life blew over the East and it became conscious of itself. The exploits of Japan bade it hope and lift up its head, whilst the revolution in Turkey and the subsequent events in Persia taught the Mohammedan communities that the future was coming to them too with change as a gift.¹ It was also the fiftieth year after the Mutiny, and some minds were affected by that. The youth in particular were moved. To the old, these things were the menace of a lightning gleam; to the young, they were the dawning of a day of hope.

The effect was at once seen in a revival of Indian national life.² It was by no

¹ I deal with the Mohammedan awakening in Chapter VII., where it fits in most conveniently.

² A serious element in the Nationalist movement to-day is the personal factor, but I simply note it in passing. The recent elections show how much personal antagonism divides the Indian camp, and how the pleasure-loving characteristics of some of the wealthier Indians are to influence the political future.



means the beginning of that life, for Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Bankim Chandra Chatterji had lived and died. It was that crisis in it, however, which corresponds to those awakenings in human life when some event seems to reveal a man's being to himself, to remove from his thoughts the unreal attractions which used to mislead him, to transfigure him so that reality becomes his pursuit. There are no beginnings, only moments of awakened consciousness. It has been said that "not within the last 2,000 years at least has the Hindu intellect undergone such a revolutionary change as these last seventy-five years have brought."

He who inquires into Indian movements finds himself invariably going along the ways which lead to the religious life. All Indian movements from bomb-throwing to personal purification begin in the sphere of religion, and this is particularly true of Nationalism. In the Punjab one finds at every turn politics and religion organically connected. In Bengal the Partition (October 16), and the Boycott (August 7) celebrations begin with bathings in the Ganges and visits to temples—they are politico-religious festivals. The leader of Bombay Nationalism, Mr. Tilak, has a



reputation as a religious leader quite as marked as his reputation as a political leader. He revived festivals like the Ganpati, which had fallen into abeyance, and he used them for the singing of audacious political songs, and the stirring up of the religious and political imagination of the people. The Ganpati festival at Poona has become a troublesome political demonstration mingled with some debased traces of its religious origin. I found every religious sect pregnant with new life, from Amritsar to Benares, from Ajmere to Calcutta. Arabindo Ghose has made the connection between his devout Hinduism and his strenuous Nationalism clear. Man has to fulfil God, he has written, and that is only possible by fulfilling himself, this again being possible only through nationality. On this religious conception rests his belief in Swadeshi and his desire to see the English predominance in India ended.

The reason is not difficult to find. The life of India is religion. Religion regulates every movement and every moment of existence. The gods are not remote, they are near at hand. They hear the tinkling of a bell hung in their temples. Every day the people enter their presence and



offer them garlands and posies of flowers; they walk about with the marks of their deities on their foreheads; their heroes were devotees; their immortal ones were saints. One gets completely bewildered by the vast crowd of religious teachers whose names have remained on the lips of these men for centuries. Take up any one of the many religious books written by Indians, and see the crowded galleries of philosophers, of teachers, of ascetics in which the Indian still wanders and worships. Everything that India has been, everything that she dreams of being, she associates with her temples, her philosophies, her schools of religious learning, her devotion to her gods. And now, when the Indian youth sees his benign mother no longer sitting in ashes on the wayside but enthroned in splendour and majesty on a seat of authority, it is as a goddess that he pictures her. India is indeed the mother goddess. The worship of maternity, which runs like a golden thread through nearly every one of his popular faiths, inspires the Indian's "Bande Mata-ram" and makes it seditious by the abandon of its filial worship, the whole-heartedness of its childlike allegiance to the soil of his birth, and the luxuriant growths of tradition and sentiment which it bears. He returns

to his gods and to the faith of his country, for there is no India without its Faith, and there is no Faith without India. The whole of Indian culture is pervaded with the assumption that India, the land, is sacred. To this extent Indian Nationalism is Hinduism.¹ No Mohammedan can enter its Holy of Holies, where politics are transfigured by the presence of the gods into religious faith, and where the struggle for civil freedom is transformed into the worship of the Hindu genius.

Certain of the strongest Nationalist sections amongst the Hindus—those in the Punjab in particular—accept the Mohammedans as fellow citizens with a grudge. Particularly bitter is their resentment against the converted Hindustani Mussulmans “who do not worship Hindustan in all her aspects, and have transferred the lien of their patriotism to Cabul or Persia or Turkey or Arabia.” These “are aliens in spite of their being born in Hindustan and lived for generations in India—they are the unwashed children of the soil.”²

¹ It is interesting to note that “Bande Mataram” was written to voice anti-Moslem feelings, although it has now lost that significance.

² Address to Indian Association at Lahore on May 1, 1908, by Srimati Sarala Devi Chaudhrani, published in *The Hindustan* of that date.



It is the Aryan who has arisen through the modern Nationalist movement. It is Indo-Aryan consciousness, with all its historical associations, which demands expression in India to-day.

This puts obstacles in the way of unity. But I have also been taught to regard these obstacles with some doubt. It is hard for an Englishman to discount statistics and outward appearances as they must be discounted in India. The spirit of Hinduism is wonderfully persistent. The prodigal son wanders back to his father's door. Beneath many veneers of faith, of worship, of culture, the Hindu personality persists. Let any one take up the biography of Swami Upadhyay Brahmabandhab, the Catholic convert, the Christian propagandist, the lecturer at Cambridge and Oxford, who never really forsook the worship of Shri Krishna, who participated in the Shivaji festival, whose Catholicism was but Hinduism plus a cross, and whose message to his countrymen was: "Whatever you are be a Hindu, be a Bengali"—and see how Hinduism can persist. From that extraordinary demonstration in modern conversion let him turn to reports on the habits of Hindu Mohammedans, and from that let him study the history of foreign invasions of Hindustan.



They all point the same moral; they all warn him against placing too much reliance upon census figures regarding faith. Hinduism is the pivot round which the life of India turns. It is a reservoir of prejudice, of feeling, of sympathy, of power as yet almost untapped, but if tapped capable of displaying a force like a swollen river which has burst its banks. It is in the worship of his gods, in his religious devotions, in his following the footsteps of his gurus that the Indian seeks after his mother, India. The Matripuja—the worship of the mother—has become a political rite. This is why the extreme Nationalist has no programme except a demand for elementary rights, no ideas of what would follow upon a self-ruling India. He is a religious votary, not a politician.

Until one has grasped the significance of this deification of India one has not mastered the psychology of the unconstitutional or force movement. The *Swaraj*¹ of April 1, 1909, wrote: "This motherland is a good deal more to us than what might be usually regarded by even astute European students as a mere apotheosis of a geographical entity. It is the symbol of our nation-idea

¹ The *Swaraj*, edited by Bepin Chandra Pal and published in London.



. . . the Divine Idea, the Logos, which has been revealing itself through the entire course of our past historic evolution and is the soul of it. This Divine Idea, this Logos, is the Deity whom we salute with the cry 'Bande Mataram'! The Motherland is really a synthesis of all the goddesses that have been, and are still being, worshipped by Hindus." This may sound rubbish to the West, which has no form in which it embodies its idea of God: to India it is the simplest and most ordinary idea. It transcends patriotism as far as religious fervour transcends egotistical emotion. It is this connection between the stormy strife of to-day and the calm decrees of the Eternal that makes the Hindu Nationalist feel that the day of glory is not far off for his country. How it is to dawn, he knows not. What is to happen by noonday, he cares not. India is coming like a bride arrayed in her garments, laden with gold and precious stones. India is immortal. The things which are important to the Western politician are of no consequence to the Hindu Nationalist.

Before one tries to understand the extremist movement of whatever degree, one cannot do better than assimilate the spirit of the *Bhagavad Gita*, the most moving



and haunting of all the sacred books of India. In its slokas, glowing with a divine light, the Indian discovers the way of self-sacrifice. It is the gospel of action, of action stern and terrible done by the body and the passions, whilst the possessing soul is at peace in the presence of the Eternal. It is the divine manual of how duty is to be done with no thought of consequences, except that it is the will and thought of the Eternal. "The contacts of matter, O son of Kunti, giving cold and heat, pleasure and pain, they come and go impermanent; endure them bravely, O Bharata. The man whom these torment not, O chief of men, balanced in pain and pleasure, steadfast, he is fitted for Immortality."

The Blessed Lord said :

Time am I, laying desolate the world,
Made manifest on earth to slay mankind !
Not one of all these warriors ranged for strife
Escapeth death ; thou shalt alone survive.
Therefore stand up ! win for thyself renown,
Conquer thy foes, enjoy the wealth-filled realm,
By it they are already overcome,
Be thou the outward cause, left-handed one.
Drona and Bhishma and Gayadratha,
Karna, and all the other warriors here,
Are slain by Me. Destroy them fearlessly.
Fight ! Thou shalt crush the rivals in the field.

Bathed in this ocean of self-surrender,



and ever filled with the music of the Divine Voice, the Indian's heart beats with ecstasy, and he goes forth to do his work. There is no limb of the vernacular press, no uncontrollable *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, or *Bande Mataram*, so dangerous, so seditious, as the "Song of the Blessed One." We can conceive of strenuous times when, with a hymn like "O God, our help in ages past" on their lips, our people went out gladly to die. Some Indians are now living in that time. The Indian assassin quotes his *Bhagavad Gita* just as the Scottish covenanter quoted his Old Testament. And the *Gita* is more cruel in the devotion and self-sacrifice it inspires than the most awful of the Old Testament passages which have been brooded over by the austere fanatics of our own history.

It is this inspiration dazzling human reason into blindness that leads astray the youths who have cast constitutionalism to the four winds, and who have entered upon the dark ways of assassination, hoping thereby to reach emancipation.

The physical force movement originated in Poona, where a proud Brahminism mingles with an equally proud political spirit, and where both have come under Western influences. But it almost immedi-



ately shifted to Bengal, where the religious spirit is more volatile and fanatical. Snugly lodged in Paris, safe from the responsibility of his own words, and careful that he never risks his own neck whilst he prompts others to risk theirs, is one who is supposed to be the responsible inspirer of assassination. That is a mistake. He does not inspire the youth of India. Theirs is another inspiration. Our education of the Hindu has set going a political evolution in which anarchism is the sequel of oppression.¹ But the real extremist leaders never cease to warn their followers against the futility of these methods. "It is the East that must conquer in India's uprising," wrote one of them in *Karmayogin* of March 26, 1910. "The divorce of intellect and spirit, strength and purity, may help a European revolution, but by a European strength we shall not conquer." And yet one incessantly hears from officials that the antidote to bomb-throwing is moral education! The futility of much of our official criticism of Indian events surpasses comprehension.

¹ An extremist Indian paper referred to bombs as "the coarse and vulgar garb of European revolutions." This view must also be kept in mind, because before the religious life of India issued in political assassination it had to be secularised by Western philosophy.



I was told to read a novel called *Anandamath*, by Bankim Chandra Chatterji, which was published in Bengali in 1882 and has been translated at different times into English,¹ because it would give me an idea of the sentiments which move the anarchists—both the bomb-throwing and the dacoity sections, if, indeed, they are not the same. It is said that this story suggested to some of the dacoity sections their methods of action. The novel relates to the rising of the Sannyasins in 1773-4, to which Warren Hastings makes several references in his correspondence. Chatterji elevates these fakirs into national heroes devoted to their country, whom they worship as their mother. In the novel appears the now famous song, “Bande Mataram.” The devotees, led by a Sannyasin called Satyananda, passed their time in a dark, desolate wood, from which they issued to plunder and destroy the foreign rulers. They lived in an ecstatic fervour, the disciples of Vishnu, the soldier guardians of *The Mother*. They called themselves *The Children*. Their battle-cry was “Hail, Mother,” and “Hari! Hari!” (one of the names of God); their song, the “Bande Mataram.” Their battles

¹ My copy is entitled *The Abbey of Bliss*, is translated by Nares Chandra Sen-Gupta, and is published in Calcutta.



and their devotions are the theme of the story.

The intellectual sides of the national movement are being well looked after. Three reviews of distinction voice Indian Nationalism: *The Indian Review*, published in Madras, which, curiously enough, has become one of the most important centres for the issue of political literature; *The Hindustan Review*, which is the most severely political and moderate, published in Allahabad; *The Modern Review*, the most literary of the three, which shows all the characteristics of the Bengal spirit and is most in sympathy with the left wing.

In addition to these, fugitive literature in a considerable quantity has been issued to explain and inspire the movement. Biography has been specially cultivated both in English and the vernacular, and the whole world has been drawn upon for heroes. History has also been written, like Ranade's *History of the Mahrattas* and Dutt's *Ancient India*; and I had from the author, lately a Judge in Bombay, but now the President of a Nationalist organisation, an interesting book with some pretension of learning on *Epic India*. Novels like those of Mr. Dutt and (of the last generation) Bankim Chandra—to whose *Abbey*



of *Bliss* I have just referred—and also of Ratan Nath Sarshar, written in various vernaculars, are widely circulated, whilst amongst poets, Sheikh Mohammed Iqbal's *Hindustan Hamara* is in some vogue. In the literature of the active movement Bengal leads. Some of its writers have the command of perfect English, and ever since the days of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Bengali has been used as a medium for controversial literature.

It is also in Bengal where the revival of Indian art has begun. There still lingers in my mind the winsome music of Robindranath Tagore sung to me by women's sweet voices on the river above Calcutta. It was sung to songs, written by this poet, of yearning and tender love for the land and its life, its mornings and its evenings, its riches and its poverty, its faith and its hopes. In fact, in Bengal one feels at once a palpitating life, a Bohemian spontaneity, an idealism, exceedingly troublesome no doubt to the Government and exceedingly dangerous to youths of enthusiastic and devotional temperaments. But it is living. It is independent. It is proud of itself. It challenges the foreigner and draws inspiration from its own past.

I have heard this revival described as a



reaction, and in a sense it is, because it is the people turning in upon themselves for inspiration after having rushed to adopt foreign ways. That, however, is not a reaction in the ordinary sense. Fifty years ago, when the Indian first awoke to the advantages of modern education, he ran to an anti-Indian extreme. He flouted his own past and shocked his own present. He thrust his Western heresies under everybody's nose. He ate meat ostentatiously, shouted the fact in the streets, and got drunk to show he was a modern. He adopted an eclectic faith more Western than Eastern. He denied the divine inspiration of the Vedas and the divine origin of his prophets, and quoted David Hume. He prided himself in being an adopted son of the French Revolution. He started the Brahmo Somaj (1828).¹ But the aggressive spirit of revolt exhausted itself. Attempts such as those of Keshub Chunder Sen were made to bring the modern movement back to a loyalty to its past. Finding himself despised and rejected of Anglo-Indian men,

¹ "I have never found one among them," wrote Macaulay, "who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia." The "modern Indian" of those days was willing to accept that libel.



the Indian was thrown back upon himself. The historical spirit returned. He began to value his own past and to find his own dreams refreshing. The revival of Oriental studies in England and Germany pleased him. Recent events added lustre to the East. Driven into his own territory, he discovered that it was a desirable land. Religion, poetry, music, literature, art, were revived no longer in imitation of the West, but faithful to the East. He ceased to be content to copy and began to think of creating. That is the explanation of the Bengal movement.

The same thing is happening elsewhere. I have described the Arya Somaj in the Punjab; but I know of no literature produced in the more matter-of-fact North-West—which argues and hates but does not see visions. The Punjab is austere, solid, “dour,” as they would say in Scotland. It produces political pamphlets but not literature. In Bombay the same spirit is at work, the difference being that the Mahratta Brahmin has a keener sense of the historical. In the United Provinces the political movement as yet is of minor importance; even the Arya Somaj there is absorbed in the educational and philanthropic work of the Society.

The one great contribution of the West to the Indian Nationalist movement is its theory of political liberty.¹ Mr. Herbert Spencer's individualism and Lord Morley's Liberalism are, as it were, the only battery of guns which India has captured from us, and condescends to use against us.

One of the most surprising factors in the present agitation is the women. I have heard of several who have actually taken a public part on the platform, and in every aspect of Nationalism women are active. We heard everywhere that in the Zenana politics are discussed; a meeting of Indian women was held to protest against the deportations; an address of congratulation was presented by women to the mother of the Editor of *Yugantar* when he was imprisoned, and the old lady made an aggressive reply. Our own experience is that many women are following very closely what is going on, that they hold bitter

¹ "We must not be ashamed to admit that we received our early political activities from the teaching and example of our foreign rulers. The first inspiration of freedom came to us from English literature and European thought, though our own special race character and national culture have made material contributions to the development of our latest civic ideals." *Swaraj*, April 1, 1909. I have read scores of political articles in Extremist papers, and the most striking thing about them is how Western they are.



opinions regarding Englishwomen in particular, and that they are responsible for a good deal of the resentment to which men give expression. The Indian woman is silent and reserved; she is shy and almost unapproachable, but she is a person of a will and of parts all the same.

Two generations ago we said we should welcome this awakening. We urged India to it; we prepared for it. Now that it has come we are afraid. We spy upon it; we deport its advocates; we plan to circumvent it. This change on our part is of fundamental significance in determining the form assumed by the awakening of India, although the "man on the spot" does not see that it ought to matter at all. The fact is, our official attitude has been the chief factor in determining the course of the Nationalist movement. It has been an attitude of friendship at first and of bitter opposition later.

The history of the National Congress is a history of the Nationalist movement. Started in 1885 by men who were rich, who were Liberals, and who had been educated in Western ways, it was purely political. Its demand was for enfranchisement and for responsibility. It was never anti-British; it has always contented itself with



demanding a measure of self-government under the British Raj. But it gave birth to a left wing, which gradually gained an independent position and drew away from it. The Anglo-Indian administrator lost his opportunity. The Congress, which ought to have been accepted by him as a useful critic, was regarded by him as an irreconcilable enemy. He resented it. He misrepresented it. He handed it over to the mercy of its left wing. The doctrine of a Sinn Fein kind of self-help, the dream of the political boycott, were encouraged by the blunders of the Government. The first indication of a split was shown at Benares in 1905 as the result of Lord Curzon's new policy; next year at Calcutta an open rupture was barely avoided. The demand for reform ceased to satisfy the Nationalists, largely because it found no sympathy from the bureaucracy. The boycott developed into a system of political action. The old Congressmen became Moderates, and what were at first shades of opinion became rival camps. The Congress itself became mean in the eyes of the young generation.

Bengal, where the agitation was most alive, was then rent in twain. The partition was not merely a blunder: it was an indictable offence. Lord Curzon's personal



feelings entered into it in a most reprehensible way. He devised it, as the evidence shows most conclusively, to pay off scores. By a division, which neither administrative convenience, nor historical tradition, nor ordinary sagacity could justify, he divided the Bengali-speaking people in such a way that, though by far and away the largest group of people in the undivided Bengal, in neither of the new provinces did they have the influence they ought justly to have. Moreover, the partition was accompanied by a series of administrative and judicial acts which definitely ranged the Government against the Hindu, and taught him that our Administration declined to do justice to him. Mohammedans proclaiming strife from the housetops were hardly cautioned; Hindus whispering their grievances were treated as criminals. In the Barisal riots in the spring of 1906 the authorities were as much implicated as the Catholic Church was implicated in the St. Bartholomew massacres or the Government of Russia in the recent *pogroms*. With the partition, the Curzon régime reached its height, and it was instantly challenged by the appearance of real sedition. It is of the greatest importance to note that the date afterwards given in the Alipur bomb



trials as that when the murderous conspiracy commenced was the day when Lord Curzon did his worst act in India by partitioning Bengal.

Thus the path was paved to Surat when the Nationalist movement as such broke away from the movement for political reform.¹ A new ideal had come into conflict with the old. Since then efforts have been made to unite the Congress. But the time for union has not yet come. A Congress in which the followers of Arabindo Ghose sit side by side with those of Mr. Gokhale will be a debating society. The Indian political movement for the time being has split, and its two sections receive inspiration from different ideals. The Moderate policy is to accept the present position and extend Indian rights under it, trusting to events to determine the ultimate position of India. The Nationalists refuse to accept the present position, and all their thoughts and actions proceed upon the assumption that they should have no part in it. This was put epigrammatically by a writer in the prescribed *Swaraj* thus: "What we want is not appointments under the Government

¹ Some Congressmen will dispute the accuracy of this antithesis, because they claim that Nationalism is still voiced by the Congress.



(this reference being to the methods of Congress), but only the right of making them." The *Karmayogin*, the recognised organ of Mr. Arabindo Ghose, defines the dispute in this way : "Nor is it a question of adhesion to, or secession from, the British Empire. That is an ultimate action which is too far off to form a question of practical politics or a subject of difference. The dispute is one of ideal, whether we shall aim at being a province of England or a separate nation on an equality with her, carrying on our ancient Asiatic development under modern conditions." ¹

When the position is explained the colossal mistake of official India in encouraging Nationalism by pouring out foolish criticism on the head of the Congress can readily be seen.

The difference in practical policy between the two sections centres round the boycott. Most Anglo-Indians confuse Swadeshi and boycott and take them to mean the same thing. They do not mean the same thing. Swadeshi is the policy of patronising, as far as it is practicable, home products, and the Government itself has adopted it. It is followed more or less consciously by every people. "Support home industries" is a

¹ Editorial in issue of December 11, 1909.

good advertisement for goods in whatever language it may be printed. It is simply an attempt to maintain a national industry, and is a recognition of the fact that, everything else being equal, the home workman, the fellow citizen, has first claims upon the consumer. In India it is also an attempt to keep alive the native industrial arts that have been fading away through several generations.

The boycott, however, has a totally different significance. It is political in its origin, and it was meant to effect a wider and deeper issue than merely the consumption of goods. Its origin can be traced as far back as 1901, when it plainly influenced the thought of the left wing of the Congress. Its home was in Bengal. But it did not become an important thing until Krishna Kumar Mittra proposed that it should be temporarily adopted, so as to convince Lancashire that Bengal was in deadly earnest in its opposition to Partition. The boycott is the politico-economic fruit of the Curzon rule. It was proclaimed at a public meeting held in Calcutta on August 7, 1905, a day which is now kept as an annual festival. At first the Extremists, who ought to have welcomed it, opposed it, because it then seemed to them to be an item in the



Moderate policy of bringing pressure to bear on the Government to grant reform; but they very soon detected the general drift of the movement, and whilst the Moderates stick to their original purpose and regard it as being merely temporary, the Extremists have directed the movement, have succeeded in associating it with their wider policy of passive resistance, and have found in the lukewarmness of the Congress to this policy one of the offences which keeps them away from Congress meetings.

Amongst the influences that have done most to make Indian Nationalism a menace has been the press, and a sentence or two must be written about it. Nothing reveals more plainly the ineffectiveness of the Indian Administration than its attitude towards sedition. It allows the Anglo-Indian press to publish day by day "highly objectionable and provocative articles against the children of the soil,"¹ which not only incite those children to reprisals but stuff the minds of the administrators themselves with stupid prejudices, and blind them to the real nature of their responsibilities. But this is done with impunity, whilst the Indian reply is regarded as sedition, as stirring up racial

¹ Presidential Address to the Third U.P. Conference, by Ganga Prasad Varma.



enmity, as bringing the Government into contempt. The whole of the special Press Law of India, and more particularly the latest attempt to strengthen it, must fill with despair the heart of any man who understands political agitation.

Two members of the Anglo-Indian press have been conspicuous for their offensiveness, so conspicuous, indeed, that had the Press Law been impartially administered in India the editors of both would have enjoyed the privilege of calm reflection within prison walls. I refer to *The Englishman* of Calcutta and *The Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore. The latter used to be edited by a Jew, whose patriotism was of the most demonstrative type, but recently it has fallen from its high estate; it seems to be feeling the effects of age. When under its late editor, however, it was an active agent in alienating the Indian from the official and in stirring up racial strife. *The Englishman* also is feeling the effects of age, but, like a decaying old virago, it still shows its teeth. One goes to its columns for the most ignorant criticisms published in India on Indian affairs. Day by day it freely publishes its pernicious impudence and inflames feelings on both sides. I was assured by journalists and officials that it



now "represents no influential section of the community," as *The Bengalee* had it, and one is very glad that this should be so. *The Pioneer* is only a shade better. It is superior, it is Conservative, and it never does an English Liberal or an educated Indian justice if it can help it. *The Times of India* is a little better than *The Pioneer*, although, again, its position is that of the immaculate Anglo-Indian, irreproachable, above criticism. I may have been unfortunate, but I never saw a really sympathetic article on Indian affairs in it, whilst it gave amusing evidence that it was sadly mesmerised by the jingle of "Pagett, M.P." As an extremist pro-official paper it would be admirable if it had as a competitor an organ like the old *Statesman*, but it holds the field alone, and its methods do all the more harm. *The Statesman* has been for long the most valuable interpreter in India of English opinion to the Indian, and the great services it has rendered to our rule in this respect when other papers were bouncing and spluttering their Imperialist and racial impertinences cannot be too highly prized. Recently, however, it has changed, and the erstwhile independent organ has become a suspiciously steady apologist for everything which the Govern-



ment says and does. It would really be a calamity if *The Statesman* were to abandon its old position for good and take its stand side by side with such papers as *The Pioneer* or *The Times of India*—a position which for the moment it occupies.

Any one with an intimate knowledge of British affairs who finds himself in India, will probably be amused at much of what he sees in the Anglo-Indian press by way of opinions, but his hair will stand on end at the cables sent twice each day for the enlightenment of Indian readers on British affairs. The news is often unimportant ; the information is as often as not quite inaccurate ; political learnings are apparent. The Indian news sent over to us is of the same kind. This work of news transmission, though of such supreme importance to both India and ourselves, seems to be entrusted to an office boy of Conservative leanings without much Conservative intelligence, and one comes across the most grotesque opinions in consequence. The morning I landed an absurd story about the Budget appeared in all the press as the leading item of information. Day after day, trivial but significant mistakes continued to appear. Even such simple news as the relations between the Miners' Federation and Messrs. Burt and



Fenwick had to be cabled to India in a stupidly inaccurate form. Thus, British news and the Anglo-Indian newspapers occupy a most unenviable position amongst the mischief-making influences of India.

The vernacular press is certainly not all that can be desired. The Hindu resents being told that he has not the historical sense, but the accusation might be proved in a Court of Law. His mind is steeped in ideas. What is time, what is event to him? Nothing but a moment in the Eternal, nothing but a ripple on the disturbed surface of spiritual reality. This strange quality carries with it appropriate weaknesses. Hard, cold fact does not make sufficient impression on such a mind. It plays with fact, and turns it round, explains it in this way and in that, and finally, perhaps, explains it away altogether. The historical faculty discovers the Eternal in the fact and does not dissolve the fact into the nothingness of the Eternal. But the historical faculty is also the faculty of political criticism, and the Western, taking up the vernacular press, will properly complain of a want of candour and of rigid sticking to fact, of too much imagination, of simile and metaphor which are used so much as to become misleading, of, in consequence,



a wordy exaggeration. One finds this in the very best of the Indian papers. I have several times had to pause and marvel at the extraordinary faculty shown by writers in these papers for leading their readers by wordy aeroplane journeys to conclusions very much in the heavens. In every paper is a resentment of British rule which nothing can eradicate, and which bites with acid criticism every action of the Government. This, moreover, is often expressed grandiloquently and in language the full force of which the writer apparently has not understood, but which must influence his readers. That this is provocative and may be dangerous, no one denies; but it is all included amongst the troubles of governing a subject race that can read, write, criticise, and imagine things.

The danger, however, is not to be removed by Press Laws or by repression of any kind. In its extreme form it must be visited by penalties, but it is its habitual and moderate use which amounts to a menace. That cannot be stopped by magistrates. To give them the power to do so is itself as great a danger to the peace of India as are the objectionable articles. Legitimate criticism would then be suppressed, as the Punjab authorities are trying to do to-day. What



is wanted is a calm and patient ruler, who turns a deaf ear to panic cries and short-sighted advice, and who goes steadily on doing justice and keeping a close companionship with educated public opinion of a constitutional character. It is a serious reflection on our administration rather than on the Indian character that any responsible official should ever think that papers like *The Bengalee*, or *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, or *The Punjabee*, are seditious or objectionable. They have written in wrath, they have sometimes misrepresented us, and they have said hard things, but neither of them at its worst has been so great a menace to our peaceable rule as *The Englishman* and *The Civil and Military Gazette* when by our officials they are supposed to be at their best.



VI

GREAT BRITAIN IN INDIA

WHEN death came to withhold the hand of Satyananda in Chatterji's *Anandamath* he explained to the heroic leader of the Sannyasins that it was not only vain but wrong for *The Children* to keep on fighting. The Mohammedan was not to rule India. His power had been broken. But the Hindu rule was not to be established then. And when Satyananda wept with disappointment, the Inexorable One said: "What will happen now will be for the best. There is no hope for a revival of the True Faith if the English be not our rulers." That True Faith had become corrupt, and could not be restored except by a return of the Hindus to "objective knowledge." "Imbued with a knowledge of objective science by English education, our people will be able to comprehend subjective truths. Then there will be no difficulties to the spread of the True Faith. It will then shine forth of itself.



Till that is so, till the Hindus are great again in knowledge, virtue, and power—till then, the English rule will remain undisturbed.”

In the forefront of any impartial estimate of what Great Britain has done for India must be benefits conferred. The Nationalist movement may now challenge our occupation and a stern judge will record many blemishes, but the historical fact remains that England saved India. Long before the East India Company built a factory, the old India was vanishing, rent asunder by internal strife, crushed down by foreign armies. We found not a Government but shifting camps, not rulers but captains of horse. Conquerors were rising and falling like corn stalks when the wind blows over the fields, and there was apparently no end to these ups and downs. The Moslem rule had broken Hindu authority ; it in turn had been shattered ; the Mahratta ascendancy never had a foundation. We came, and consolidation followed on our footsteps. Diversities of race and religion found liberty, and the spirit of a united India found rest to its harassed wings. Under our protection India has enjoyed a recuperative quiet. If we cannot say that our rule has been a necessary factor in the development of Indian civilisation, we can say that in view of historical Indian



conditions it has been a necessary evil. A foreign conqueror had to come, and no nation in the world, either at that time or to-day, could have done the work nearly so well as we have done it. Be our mistakes what they may, no alien rulers would have avoided them. Many of them could only have been discovered after they were made. Great Britain, undergoing a most searching self-examination and confessing as the result that she has committed many sins against India, need not accompany her confession with the shadow of an apology to the rest of the world. To herself she may say, with Sir Hugh Clifford: "God forgive us for our sorry deeds and our generous intentions"; for the fact is that no race can govern another quite justly.

"I am most happy to say," said the President of the Reception Committee responsible for arranging the Madras Congress (1908), "that the general feeling of all classes of His Majesty's subjects throughout India towards the British Government is one of deep gratitude for the many blessings conferred on India, the most important of which are security of life and property, liberal education, medical and famine reliefs, sanitation and facilities of communication." Perhaps beyond these blessings should be



placed those moral reforms such as the forbidding of sati, of human sacrifice, of female infanticide—horrors never sanctioned by pure Hinduism, but which had become vigorous fungoid growths upon it.

On the other side of the account, however, is the great loss to India that this peace has been bought at the price of her own initiative. That is the real objection to all attempts to govern a country by a benevolent despotism. The governed are crushed down. They become subjects who obey, not citizens who act. Their literature, their art, their spiritual expression go. They become the hewers of wood in their national industrial economy. They degenerate to the level of copyists. They cease to live. This is particularly the case when it is not only one nation which holds another in subjection but one civilisation which attempts to mould and control another. And when we recall the riches of Indian civilisation and the social organisation which it has handed down from time immemorial,¹ this loss of initiative and of self-development is greater as regards

¹ On account of this, the Indian gives but a limited credit to us for some of our achievements. Cf. "The Indian revenue administration twenty-two hundred years back does not fall short of the best ideals of the civilised British Government of to-day."—*Epic India*, by C. B. Vaidya, M.A., LL.B.



India than almost any other country. One day I stood in Delhi looking at some of the wonderful remnants there seen in stone of the Mogul times. An Indian friend was with me and pointed out what changes we had made in the masonry. "You have jerry-built, you have whitewashed, you have destroyed," said he. Then raising his head as a wider meaning to his words entered his mind, he repeated with a smile: 'You have jerry-built, you have whitewashed, you have destroyed.'

At the root of most of our mistakes is the assumption that India should copy us. We are guided by standards of personal and social virtue which are the products and expressions of our own historical experience but which are alien from those of India. And yet we place ourselves, the conquerors, on a pedestal as the one example for men. We started Western education under the impression that the result would be that Indian superstition would vanish and a race would appear fit for representative institutions and endowed with all the best qualities of Englishmen. When that happened we imagined we would welcome the issue and with gladness allow it to have its natural political outcome. If we go through India to-day with these declarations of two genera-



tions ago in mind, our hearts will be weary and sad. Western education has undoubtedly done much for the Indian. It has destroyed his isolation of mind and it has opened the way back for him to his ancient intellectual triumphs. Above all, it has put school-books in his hand containing as elegant extracts poems by Byron, Brutus's speeches from *Julius Cæsar* and similar things, and it has thus imparted to him the spirit which craves for nationality, and has taught him the principles upon which that craving must proceed to translate itself into definite political demands. It has thus not only given biographies of Garibaldi to India but has revived the worship of heroes like the Maharana Pratap, the lion-hearted Rajput, who resisted the Mohammedans as Hereward resisted the Normans. But our educational methods were begun by a generation and by men who had no historical sense and whose sociological theories were based upon the assumption that every mind at the beginning is a blank tablet upon which anything can be written. Therefore our methods were too absolute. The education we gave was not a graft upon Indian civilisation, but a transplanted slip of Western civilisation. "Our efforts," said Macaulay, "ought to be directed to make



natives of this country thoroughly good English scholars." The break caused was too violent. The educated was uprooted. He was taught to look upon his past with contempt and to be an alien amongst his own people. He has had to revolt against us to regain his faith and his historical affinities. The language in which he spoke was also botched, and by insisting that his higher education should be given in English we have cut that off as it were from his original being and have introduced a dualism into his mind.

The same influences have been at work on Indian art. It was first of all neglected, and in some of its industrial aspects literally crushed out. In villages it still survives, though greatly weakened. Mr. E. B. Havell, the late Art Adviser to the Indian Government, accused us of gross neglect and actual discouragement.¹ The Government has no Oriental imagination. It is dull and utilitarian, economical in its idealism, and extravagant only on its monetary side. One can only feel melancholy to hear it pride itself that it has provided cheap cotton at the expense of the old industries. It is blind

¹ See his interesting article in *The Hindustan Review*, April 1909, and his paper read to the Royal Society of Arts, London.



to the important items on the debit side of that account. One shudders whilst going through the wonderful palaces built like the fairy palaces of our youth and furnished in the trashiest upholstery displayed in London shops where newly married suburbans are attracted to furnish on the hire system. When at last Lord Curzon began to talk of art it was as a vulgar Philistine. He has been described as a builder of Rhine castles at Simla and a patcher-up of ancient Mogul palaces. He chose restoration instead of preservation of ancient buildings, and, consequently, whoever visits places like Delhi, Agra, Fatepur Sikri, and similar shrines, has his sensibilities jarred by patches of new masonry, painting, and inlaying in imitation of the old that has gone.¹ Not until the industrial revolt of Swadeshi and the boycott was entered upon was there a return of any importance to the rich industrial arts of India. But once again it can be claimed that a few Englishmen redeemed our reputation. Men like James Fergusson, General Cunningham, Sir George Birdwood, and

¹ By good luck, some of his work is worthy of unqualified praise. What he has done, for instance, to the Shah Jehan marble summer-houses on the bund of the lake at Ajmere must be praised without stint, but there he could do little meddling. He simply cleared away English débris in the shape of buildings.

finally Mr. Havell must always be thought of when Indian art is mentioned. Moreover, when driven into a corner, we may defend ourselves by this thought, that the white-wash of British Philistinism laid over the palaces of Delhi was not so destructive to Indian art as the fanaticism of Aurungzebe.

The source of most of our failures is a lack of sympathetic imagination, which shows itself in a policy of transplanting English views in social ethics on to Indian soil. The result is confusion—confusion in the Indian mind and confusion in Indian society; and from this confusion with its disappointing results, arises the discouragement of so many of our officials which drives them within their own shells, fills their hearts with despair that the Indians will “ever do anything,” and gives rise to that separation of European and Indian life which every one who has not come under the deteriorating influences of India deplotes. The two races misunderstand each other, and Indian society makes the misunderstanding inevitable. If similar social causes do not produce similar results in England and in India, the man who is working on the assumption that they will, and who meets with unexpected failure, will only in a rare number of cases condemn his methods; as a



rule he will condemn his material. We have assumed that India would respond to Western methods, and we have been disappointed: that is the key to nearly every big problem which we are facing in India to-day.

In the chapter on "The Ways of the Native" I used this key to explain the false witness and the serious hindrances that have been put in the way of the administration of British justice in India.¹ I have also shown how Western methods of economy, with their characteristic feature of averaging income and expenditure, have inflicted injury upon the Indian cultivator. I should like to reinforce these examples by another.

Let us consider that important personage in village economy, the bania, or money-lender. We have come to despise him, to curse him, to lay at his door the bulk of the economic woes of the people. We talk so incessantly of the 20 and 30, 50 and 60 per cent which he imposes, of the liens he establishes on crops, of his transactions as a grain merchant, of his mortgages and foreclosures, that he has become the villain in the village tragedy.

¹ Another interesting inquiry is into crime, when it can again be shown that one of its most prolific sources is the break-up of the community spirit and discipline.



In the old village economy, however, the bania was a respectable and a useful man. He performed a leading function in the commercial life of the people. He was the capitalist who made savings available for individual use, and who made possible both those elaborate ceremonies which Indian religion demanded and those recoveries from famine which Indian climate made necessary. Nominally even then he was a usurer, but he was kept in strict restraint by the public opinion of the village. He was not independent of the goodwill of his neighbours. Public opinion menaced him on every transaction. He was indeed a public functionary not acting in accordance with his own personal will but in reality following the village will. He was part of a communist society; and if he did not play his part honestly he might have to suffer having his house broken into, his papers burned, and a village verdict passed on him that it served him right.

We came to the village. We did not understand its spiritual or its economic basis. We regarded the bania as a Western capitalist, just as in the Permanent Settlement of Bengal we regarded the tax-collecting agent as a landowner. We surveyed lands and laid down definite boundaries; we created



individual landlords; we established regular courts, which applied to India the property laws of the West. We thus elbowed the money-lender out of the village economy, and made him a separate individual dealing with property securities belonging to other separate individuals. To add to the misfortune of this social disruption, it came at a time when the trading classes were becoming rich by the building of railways and the extension of the grain markets, and lawyers were becoming numerous as the result of a false education. The money-lender was beset by temptations to grab land, to be the master of the cultivator, to become a usurer of the worst kind. Thus we trace in an unbroken series of transformations the evolution of this person from a beneficent social functionary to an objectionable individualist exploiter, owing to the mistakes of the Western administrators.

The fact that we have been making mistakes has gradually dawned upon us, for when, for instance, 80 per cent of the cultivators in the United Provinces have mortgages hanging about their necks, the situation has become serious, and we have been trying to undo the evils by the passing of Courts of Wards Acts—which enable the Government to take the estates of “incap-



able " persons under its own charge for the time being, and so rid them of debt and other hindrances; Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Acts; and, above all, a series of provincial measures, varying in their provisions, and culminating in the Punjab Land Alienation Act of 1900, which prohibited the sale of land in the Punjab except to members of agricultural tribes.

But excellent as our intentions may now be, and guided as they may also be by a glimmering knowledge of the mischief we have unwittingly done, we have destroyed the old social and economic organisation of India; we cannot restore it now in its unity and harmony, and we have not begun to succeed in putting anything in its place.

Here another path of inquiry opens out. What has been the effect of our propaganda of the Christian faith in India? Since the third century Christian missionaries have worked here; for three centuries the Catholics, and for two the Protestants have been labouring in this field. With what results? This is a very difficult question to answer, and is, moreover, one which must be answered differently in different districts. Apart from the statistical answer that only 1 per cent of the Indian population is Christian, one or two conclusions



may be accepted as representing the general opinion of the Indian and Anglo-Indian alike.

The first is that the number of conversions has been exceedingly small, and that the converts themselves have been mostly unimportant. Preaching in the bazaars has become like the Sunday meetings in Hyde Park. How little direct effect Christianity has had on the individual Indian can easily be seen from conversations with him and from reading his religious literature.¹

But there are two missionary activities which are having a considerable effect upon India. The first is the Medical Mission and the second is the Missionary School and College. Both indicate a form of propaganda which, though indirect, is really changing India. Many missionaries have given up the notion that India is to be Christianised by individual conversions, and look to a change in the mental points of view of the people. The "preaching of Christ and Him crucified" is therefore, as it were, postponed, and the greatest energy

¹ "Do you not," we asked some Indian ladies one day, "fear that if you send your daughters to convent schools they will be made Christians?" "Oh, no," they smiled in reply, "we are not afraid of your religion." They implied that they were quite superior to it.



is thrown into a transfusion of Indian feelings, thoughts, and mental axioms, with Christian feelings, thoughts, and mental axioms.¹ This has much to be said for it from the point of view of scientific sociology. The life of a people is a whole, and important departments of it cannot be abstracted from the rest and changed. Hinduism penetrates Indian life as consciousness penetrates the body; and if any fundamental change in creed is to be effected over a large area, the pervading spirit must be attacked. Thus we find Christianity in India engrafting itself upon the active life of the country, upon the minds of the people, influencing them insensibly, leavening them; and the effect is in the main twofold. A universal humanitarianism is being understood by a

¹ Cf. a paper by the Rev. C. F. Andrews of the Cambridge Mission, Delhi, in the November issue (1909) of *The Indian Interpreter*, from which I take these sentences: "I am led more and more by my missionary experience to regard the conversion of India, not as the aggregate of so many individual conversions, but far rather as a gradual process of growth and change in thought, idea, feeling, temperament, conduct—a process which half creates and half re-constructs a truly Christian religious atmosphere, Indian at its best, and Christian at its best. . . . This does not of course mean that I cease to believe in the conversion of the individual, but I seem to see other and more silent processes of the spirit, which lead, it may be, to more distant, but to no less important results."



people so divided by caste that humanity has ceased to exist for them. Thus the people are being taught the oneness of the human soul—and the equality and justice which arise from that—brotherhood, care for all, service to mankind. On the other hand, the Christian propaganda is a valuable aid to those native Indian forces making for monotheism and reality in worship, although to the educated and philosophical Hindu, Trinitarianism is a stumbling-block. In the discipline which the Indian has to undergo in order that his religion may result in ethical conduct, Christian influence, if wisely directed, is to play a great part.

The Christian ethic, acting with Western political ideas, has also raised the condition of the outcast in India. To the outcast the missionary has specially appealed, and from the outcast he has won most of his converts. The last Census Report has shown that the Christian gains of recent years have been almost exclusively from aborigines and outcasts. The effect is only beginning to be seen. The outcast himself is beginning to question his position. The Brahmin has behaved brutally to him, and he is allowing himself now to hate the Brahmin. Round the privileged castes a flood of resentment is silently rising, and it will rise much more



quickly as elementary education spreads in India. This explains why there have been some remarkable demonstrations of the outcasts against the Nationalist movement. To many of them Indian Nationalism means Brahminism, and they look to Great Britain for their emancipation. This also explains why at every Hindu social reform conference the position of the outcast is seriously discussed and proposals made for his inclusion in the Hindu community; why the Brahmo Somaj and the Arya Somaj are paying special attention to him; why various Hindu associations are turning their eyes upon him; why Islamism gains so many converts from him. Nor do we see this liberalising and equalising movement working in the outcasts alone, for in India to-day there is a considerable hubbub over claims made by inferior castes to be ranked higher than they have been. At meals, in schools, in public activities, even in religious exercises, one now notices in India the intermingling of castes; the great strides towards the emancipation of women marked by the remarriage of widows and the raising of the age of marriage, the propaganda amongst the dancing-girl castes in Madras, the founding of really efficient educational establishments for girls, the



breaking through of the Purdah system, signify a great deal; and these are the products of Western thought and Western criticism routing from the mind of India the evil spirits which took possession of it when it descended from its ancient greatness and its religion became debased. Nor are the higher castes themselves sheltered against this liberalising spirit. They are freer to go and come, to eat and drink, to travel and converse than ever they were, and their ceremonies of expiation are becoming more and more formal and nominal.

In a category all by themselves stand the material improvements wrought upon the land. Curiously enough, our greatest failures in this respect have arisen when we sneered at the Indian method of doing things. We sneered at his plough and his cultivation, and when we tried our own we failed, and often only gave him cause to laugh at us. During our visit we frequently heard of farms tilled on Western methods that had become almost barren.¹ But we are now going about our improvements in a scientific, experimental way, basing our changes upon Indian experience, and good results will soon be reaped. A history of

¹ This recalled to us similar tales and experiences which we gathered some years ago in South Africa.



British agriculture in India would follow, both in the spirit it would reveal and the failures it would record, on lines parallel with those of our general administration of the country.

The railways, to which most people turn with pride, are also but moderate successes from the Indian point of view. They now form a vast network of communications, but a considerable mileage was developed with imperial military needs primarily in mind, and has, in consequence, been a serious burden to the country. Only quite recently, with the completion of the lines approved by commercial strategy, has the dead weight of those made to meet the requirements—often only supposed requirements—of military strategy been overcome and the railways made profitable.

Our most conspicuous benefit has been irrigation.¹ One does meet people in India who are doubtful of the final success of this. They tell you that the irrigation canals are disturbing the natural drainage of the country, that they are water-logging the land, that they bring fever with their water.²

¹ In 1906-7 the total area irrigated from public works was 22,225,000 acres.

² These criticisms are now held to be seditious by the Government, judging by the speech of the head of the Home Department when introducing the new Press Law Bill (1910).



Irrigation engineers and doctors quite willingly admit that there is something in these fears, and are bending their energies and their skill to prevent the worst consequences from happening.

But leaving the future alone, every one who wanders over an irrigated region must feel as though he were beholding a miracle. We chose the Chenab Colony, with its capital, Lyallpur, founded in 1896, and now a municipality with twelve councillors, as the place where we were to see the effects of water on the desert. In this district only a few years ago a solitary tree was famous as a landmark. The land was barren but for useless scrub and for a short-lived fodder which sprang up after the rains, and on account of which the land paid a grazing rent of about one penny per acre. Across it roamed primitive nomadic peoples, who subsisted largely on cattle-lifting, and whose ways of life are well shown in a proverb which was current amongst them : " My child, if you cannot steal you will die of hunger." An escort was required for caravans and cattle droves crossing this territory, and a regular scale of payment for protective services at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the value of the property guarded was accepted. A fee of ten rupees



was paid to the tribesmen to pursue and attempt to recover a stolen camel or buffalo.

All that is changed. A canal constructed as an inundation channel in 1887 was made into an irrigation canal, and the country was ready for colonisation at the beginning of 1892. The cattle-lifter is now handling the plough, and is being taught the allurements of the law courts. We saw some of them hovering in the precincts of the Lyallpur Court House being fleeced by the new predatory band of pleaders and writers. An area of 3,800 square miles—with another 2,000 within range—of which 3,000 are already allotted to cultivators, has been irrigated.¹ In 1901 83,000 people, drawn from congested districts of the north and north-west,² and grouped in 1,418 villages, had settled upon it. They came with all their village communities—washermen, barbers, carpenters, smiths, sweepers—and settled in their new surroundings. Discouraged at first by many circumstances, not the least of which was a virulent out-

¹ The irrigated plain of the Punjab comprises an area of 12,000,000 acres, which are now free from the risk of crop failure.

² The population in 1891 was 70,000; by 1906 it was 858,000.



break of cholera, but encouraged by a good crop, they took root, and now they tell you merrily of their interesting experiences. "I came on a camel," said one of the cultivators to me, "and now——" he left his sentence to be finished by a significant sweep of his hand across the landscape 'shaded by trees and rich in growing crops. I came across a ballad sung by a blind wanderer in the streets of Lyallpur in 1899. One of its verses translated into English runs thus :

Behold the gifts of my Lord.
To the Sikh Jats have been given lands,
Till now, up to their ankles in poverty,
So, they prosper before mine eyes,
Drink wine and roam with curled moustache.
Hear you the tale of Lyallpur,
Where grain and water abound.
The canal runs by the gateways,
Trees have been planted in rows,
And green grass comes sprouting up.

Railways are running through the district and grain markets have been opened at different centres. Though we were not there in the grain season, the large market at Lyallpur was busy with traffic. The export of wheat from the area was 8,124,607 maunds in 1903, and each acre yields on the average 20 to 30 maunds.¹ In addition

¹ A maund is 82 lb.



to that, cotton is grown, 567,212 maunds having been exported in 1903. The land revenue amounts to one million and a quarter rupees, and the canal dues range between eight and ten million rupees. That is the Government income from the colony, and it certainly does not represent more than a fair economic rent. Truly we can say of this place : "The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."

But behind all merely physical or political improvements and influencing their value lies the consideration, What is the spirit of the rulers ? What is the social atmospheric influence of the men who are representing us out there ? The answer given to those questions is more important than the balance of material gain or loss which our occupation of India carries with it. It is more productive of political peace and un-settlement.

Up to the present moment the Government has been an autocracy, a despotism. In 1858 the control of Indian affairs passed into the hands of a Secretary of State assisted by a Council ; in 1861 a kind of legislature was established in the provinces ; in 1892 a semblance of representative authority was given to these Councils ; in 1909 this semblance was made more of a reality. But



the real governors of India are the Commissioners and District Collectors, who are administrators and judges in one, and who are supported in all their doings by the whole system to which they belong, and which recognises them as being itself. On the governing and administrative authorities representatives of the subjects have been in a minority; their powers of criticism have been strictly confined within the narrowest limits; government officials have held the offices which carried real power—for instance, the chairmanship of municipal bodies with a few exceptions like Bombay. Thus Indians of self-respect have generally kept aloof from these bodies, and municipal administration has been never out of the hands of officials. Provincial Councils have been on the same footing, and the Viceroy's Council has been no better. Up till now there has been hardly a shadow of self-government in India.

Under these circumstances good personal relations between the officials and the people were of the utmost importance. But in this respect things have been going from bad to worse. When India was six or ten months away from London the men who went out either as agents for the Company or officials of the Government, felt them-



selves cut off from home. They lived with the people and adopted many of their habits from squatting on the ground to hookah smoking; they took wives from the people. Their rule was far from good, their administration far from pure. But it had something sympathetic in it. With the annexation of India by the Government a change for the better took place. India was still isolated from Great Britain; the men who went out there still lived in the same style as the people, the purifying influence of Parliamentary sovereignty improved the administration. There was less exploitation and more administration. Then came the Suez Canal and the steamship. Competitive examinations supplied a new set of men drawn from a new social stratum, few of whom began with any interest in, or connection with, India, the majority of whom went up for the examination because Indian service offered good pay, a respectable status, and a desirable pension. They then brought out their women folk. Hill stations had to be invented, and the other distracting problems of separated families arose. The white woman in India enormously complicated the difficulties of government. She became responsible for the extravagant follies of Indian life, and she



embittered racial antagonism by her narrow-minded prejudices and ignorance. In later days the Imperialist spirit came to heighten the little pinnacle upon which so many officials lived, to increase their superior offensiveness, and to repel to a greater distance the self-respecting Indian. Or I might summarise the situation in a different way. The first generation of British rule was one of rest. The country was exhausted and required a breathing space and security. It found both under the East India Company. The second generation lived on the memories of the first, and the fruits of peace, chiefly education and a copying of the ways of the conqueror, began to ripen. The third was a generation advancing in Western ways and of governors contemplating with calmness a national self-government as the issue of their protective activity. All this time the rule was personal. The governors knew the governed intimately—more particularly the ruling and educated families of the country. Then the division came. The results of their education policy made the governors doubt, because it produced criticism, rivals, a claim for equality. They fell back upon the uneducated mass and the gulf between the old families, and the educated people on the one hand and them-



selves on the other, widened. The two civilisations began to crystallise apart. The Indian drew to himself his own elements, the Anglo-Indian drew to himself his elements. The Indian refused to show deference as of old (by leaving his carriage, for instance, at the outer gate and walking up the drive), whilst some of our collectors have failed to receive visitors standing and others have not had the manners to ask visitors to be seated. The English used to honour Hindu festivals in Bengal (just as the Maharajah of Gwalior keeps Christmas out of respect to the British); but that I was told is a thing of the past. The assumption of everybody who went to rule in India used to be that he would have to pick up what languages were necessary to enable him to speak with the people. But the arrogance of these modern days began to assume that that was quite unnecessary. "The number of officers who spoke the vernaculars with any facility," said Lord Curzon, "was very much smaller than fifty or twenty-five years ago, and the number devoting themselves to anything like a serious study of the literature of the country was diminishing year by year." The Bishop of Lahore, Dr. Lefroy, whose splendid success is due solely to his faculty of understanding the people and the civilisation



which surrounds him, has voiced the same complaint. By a law as inevitable in its consequences as any law in mathematics, the present political agitation arose.

The separation between governed and governor reached its widest point during the Curzon régime. So offensive to all sections of Indian opinion had this Viceroy become that even his good deeds created resentment and suspicion. If any one man is responsible for the present anarchism which is lifting its head in India, Lord Curzon is. He divided Bengal in such a way that a change which would have been accepted if carried out with ordinary consideration has given rise to a resentful hatred; some educational reforms he made were believed to be designed to destroy Indian education; private circulars, anti-Hindu in their purport, were issued by him, which of course came to light; he publicly insulted the people over whom he ruled. When he had to resign it was not merely a sigh of relief but an exclamation of delight which rose up in India. The mad Holkar,¹

¹ This was the Holkar of whom many stories are told. One is that once when Lord Curzon was anxious that Holkar should receive him, he sent a message through the Resident to that effect. Holkar replied: "Tell Lord Curzon that I am indifferent." Anxious that the feeling he expressed should be conveyed accurately to the Viceroy,



to whom Lord Curzon had been specially objectionable, hit the mood of practically the whole of India when, after declining to meet the Viceroy for some time, he sent a telegram to the boat in which he was to leave, saying that as they were now companions in disgrace perhaps they might console each other. India guffawed when it heard the story. India had been brought to the point of rebellion. The Chiefs of the Native States were offended, the people had been insulted. Every ranting Extremist could gather a following, the boycott was inaugurated and the manufacture of bombs was begun.

The spirit of the moment strengthened the personal shortcomings of the Viceroy. It was the time when Imperialism appeared to be carrying everything before it. Sir Charles Eliot, K.C.M.G., writing in *The Westminster Gazette*,¹ said : " I knew India first in 1884, and there can I think be no doubt that since that time the European official

he had a further interview with the Resident and explained himself further in this way : " If a beggar goes to see a hippopotamus, the hippopotamus wags his tail. He is indifferent. If Lord Curzon goes to see him, he wags his tail. He is indifferent. I am like the hippopotamus. Explain that to Lord Curzon." If the story is an invention, it belongs to that class of fiction which illustrates truth.

¹ Quoted in *The Indian Review* for February 1908.



class has become more isolated. . . . Nor has the recent Imperialist movement tended to lessen this isolation but rather to increase it. The Imperialist thinks of 'our dependencies,' of the white man's burden and the glories of the island race. He puts himself and his countrymen in the place of an Imperial monarch, and in imagination shares the crown. But that is exactly the type of sentiment that is not wanted in India." The offensiveness of the official had reached its climax.¹

Since then a slight reaction has set in. Some of the younger men who have breathed the purer atmosphere which has been enveloping Great Britain since the end of the South African War, are following wiser and more sympathetic lines of policy. The administration of such men has been accepted by the people as an indication of a new spirit, and the negative qualities of Lord Minto have given the country rest and helped to change the spirit of British administration. Moreover, it must not be

¹ Some confusion in testimony exists regarding the Curzon régime, but the explanation is simple. For the first year or two Lord Curzon behaved acceptably and indeed did some things which won for him the affection of the people. At that time he was very popular. Then he changed, and the favours he had gained passed like a dream, and ill-will took their place.

forgotten that in the very worst days of Lord Curzon's government there were men who stuck to the better traditions of our rule. I have seen some of these men; I have heard others who have gone mourned over, and I have learned that to talk of the British official as though he were all of the same stamp is just as erroneous as to talk of India as though it were the home of one people.

With the warning that any generalisation about officials must always be subject to important exceptions one may, however, indicate certain general aspects of our government in its relations to the people. To begin with, there is a gulf fixed between the two. This is not altogether our fault, but it is much more our fault than we admit. A distinguished lawyer of Lucknow, a gentleman educated in England and married to the daughter of an Indian occupying one of the most important offices in the Government, found himself at Mussoorie last year. He desired to subscribe to the public library there, and finding nothing in the rules to debar him, he applied for membership. In a few days he was informed that his application had not been entertained, the reason being that he was not a European. In Lucknow there is a Civil



and Military Club occupying one of the residences of the vanished Kings of Oudh. The rent it pays to the Government for the building is nominal, in fact it is a State-subsidised institution. But it is as hard for an Indian to set foot in this club as it is for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. It is controlled by a clique of military officers from the neighbouring cantonment. Decency has forbidden them from excluding some of the living representatives of the ruling families of Oudh, and one night we were entertained by an amusing description of how the military black-ballers were hoodwinked by another Indian candidate for membership. This practice of exclusion is the rule in the towns in British India, from Bombay to Calcutta and from the Himalayas to Ceylon. Mention of the Yacht Club in Bombay to an Indian is almost an insult, but I refer to the Lucknow case, because if the Government had had any insight into the little insults that rankle, it would long ago have ceased at any rate to subsidise this private club, and would have made it pay a proper rent for the premises it occupies—or open its doors.

The exclusiveness of clubs is only indicative of a much wider exclusiveness. We were entertained to dinner one evening by



a member of a leading Mohammedan family in India,¹ and the conversation turned for a time upon the behaviour of the British Resident and the cantonment military people. The final remark of the lady of the household, who had travelled in England, and had been for years out of purdah, was: "I did my best to be friendly with them, but they seemed to resent it. I think the ladies of the military you send here must come from very low classes. They are so rude. I met real ladies in England, not sham ones." One of the greatest Oriental scholars living, a man who has had the degree of LL.D. conferred upon him by one of our own universities, said to me: "Relations are getting worse. No Englishman except —— calls upon me like a son. Our rulers are making hypocrites of us." We were entertained by Mohammedans and by Hindus of many grades in the social and religious scale, and we have talked on this subject with all sorts of people from Maharajahs to Christian outcasts, but we did not meet a dozen Indians who said that the social relations of Indians and Europeans were satisfactory. On the other hand,

¹ Obviously it is not always possible to give particulars which will enable the sources of my information to be identified.



we found that the educated and self-respecting Indian was ceasing to call on Europeans and was cutting off all connections, except purely business ones, with them.¹ Even in educational work co-operation is grudgingly recognised. St. Andrew's College in Delhi has an Indian Principal and a European staff working under him; but the most worthy of that staff, the Rev. C. F. Andrews, Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge, was struck off a list of nominees for Fellowships of the Punjab University by the Lieutenant-Governor's own hand, and a man

¹ I have not used the many well-authenticated tales of provocation, rudeness, and injustice which I heard. They would fill a volume all by themselves. I must relate two cases, however. A highly placed official once met a funeral. Instead of stopping his carriage he literally lashed his way through the mourners. A mourner sprang at the official's horse. A scuffle ensued, the native was brought before a magistrate and sent to jail. Another case—from which I received much entertainment owing to the chaffing which one of my hosts, who was concerned in it, received about it—happened in Benares a day or two before I arrived there. My friend was in a motor which dared to pass another motor in which a major (or captain) sat. The major laid information that my friend was driving at an excessive speed. The evidence showed that the charge was ridiculous, and the accuser altered his evidence. But the English magistrate fined my Indian friend irrespective of the evidence, and on the sole ground apparently that military prestige has to be maintained at all hazards. This magistrate would have been much benefited if he had heard the remarks I did.



of no educational attainments put in his place, for no other reason than that Mr. Andrews has the confidence of Indians. The list of these personal affronts is exceedingly long.

The Pax Britannica has produced insolence amongst the governors. They resent the idea of equality, and the more they resent it the more does it take possession of the people. Thus estrangement widens, and shows itself in offensiveness of manner, and, in rarer instances, in personal violence. It is of some interest to note that the first mention of the bomb as a way of redressing Indian grievances was when the Calcutta daily vernacular paper, the *Sandhya*, spoke of it for personal defence.

The relationship is made all the worse by the unfortunate position of the Eurasian. An outcast from English society and intercourse himself, he vents his unhappiness on the pure Indian, whom he despises most heartily. Railway incivilities, which are the most prolific cause of resentment on the part of Indians, are generally offered by Eurasian officials.

Of all this the Government official is only partly conscious. He does not grasp his own position, partly because no one ever tells him in unmistakable language what it



is. A host of ours was one morning telling us of the rudeness of the collector of his locality in continuation of what we had been hearing from an ex-official on the previous evening. Whilst we were still talking on the subject, the collector himself appeared and joined in the conversation. He pooh-poohed in the loftiest manner possible any suggestion that there was a social gulf fixed, or that officials had not the confidence of the people of the district. Turning to our host he said: "Take myself. Am I not popular?" There was a moment of intense amusement for us, during which our host seemed to be ransacking his stores of polite language for a suitable reply. At length he stammered: "Well, there is no hostility between us." The collector, far too absorbed in himself to see the point of the reply, turned round a beaming face to me and said: "I told you so. Of course I am popular." And the worst of it was he really believed it.

I found the readiest gateway to the more unfortunate states of official feeling by studying the mental attitude which looks everlastingly upon prestige. One hears of prestige in official India until one is thoroughly sick of the word—good as it is in itself. If the official would only sit down



for half an hour and, leaving his preconceived notions on one side, try to climb out of the deep mental rut into which he has sunk owing to the frequent use of meaningless words, he might then understand something about prestige. His idea of prestige is that he must be allowed to do what he likes; that he must show the strong hand in government, and restrain the strong nerve and the kind heart as being weakening; that he must stand no nonsense. He may be known to drink numerous whisky pegs in his club and his general character may be shady. He may be known to be biased in his judgments and to hold the "native" in contempt. But he does not consider that these things, the subject of endless gossip and comment outside, have any influence on his prestige. In Simla, his Holy Place of Government, he may allow his wife and daughter to play in dramas that are as meaningful to the Indian mind as a low French farce is to the English mind; he or his wife may spend the evenings in a perpetual whirl of dances under circumstances which make an unsophisticated—or, perhaps, sophisticated—Indian stare in amazement;¹ he may be involved

¹ A well-known Indian potentate was recently taken to a dance at Simla. After looking on for some time



in personal and domestic affairs which can be described only by a vixenish female novelist who has a spite against her sex. But apparently it never enters into his head that all these things undermine his influence and damage his prestige. I wish those officials who are subject to this censure could have heard Indians speak of their conduct and so been put in a position to estimate the effect on prestige of Simla festivities, gymkhanas, personal habits, conduct on the bench, and similar displays of the ruling will become imperious.

I have been with officers whose arrival in a village was the signal of demonstrations of delight, and whose coming to a house was passed round by overjoyed servants, from sweepers to cooks, who all contrived to pay personal respects. These are the mainstays of our rule in India. When you discuss prestige with them they get angry, because they never think of it and do not pursue it. They know that prestige is the free gift of the gods for good conduct—and they also know the value of their fellow civilians, in whose mouths and thoughts prestige is as frequent as “back-sheesh” is in the mouths of beggars.

he got tired, and informed his host that the girls looked very well but that they might now be dismissed!



The greatest of all the delusions under which our officials live is that whilst they are distrusted by the professional and educated classes, they are regarded by the uneducated villagers as their friends and protectors. That the educated Indian oppresses the uneducated is too often true, and that the British official has over and over again stepped in and protected the sheep in process of being shorn, cannot be denied; that in legal disputes the litigants often prefer a British to an Indian magistrate is also beyond dispute; that the villager salaams and tells the sahib that his presence is as the sun and his justice like the decrees of Providence, is a fact. But all this goes but a short distance in endearing the official to the heart of the villager. The Collector sahib remains the Collector sahib, a foreigner, an outsider, one to be flattered undoubtedly, one to be used when there is occasion, a protector in the day of trouble, but all that amounts to very little, to infinitely less than scores of self-satisfied officers imagine. The official hears nobody talk behind his back, and yet that is more necessary in India than in many other places. He is always warning other people against the polite duplicity of the Indian, but he accepts as gospel



every salaam offered to himself. The fact is that in so far as there is opinion in the village it is made in the first place by the schoolmaster or one of the more or less educated functionaries, and those as a rule are opposed to the official; and, in the second place, by those few men who read the vernacular press of an anti-Government colour which is circulating more and more, I was told, in villages.

In Baroda I came across a conclusive instance of the fundamental and ineradicable difference between native and foreign rule. We were told by one of the most influential and respected of our representatives that a scheme of town improvement in which he was interested was hopelessly blocked because some tomb or other stood in the way. But the site of the modern Lakshmi Vilas Palace in Baroda was formerly a burying place. Here we have the situation in a nutshell. The native ruler has a freedom which we with all our powers have not won. That we can overcome this fundamental obstacle if we go about it in the right way is quite certain, and to prove it an official told me the following incident. There was once a certain collector whose characteristics were silence and justice. He was removed to a new district. Some



time afterwards trouble broke out in his old place owing to suspicions entertained regarding a new order. The people took it into their heads that there was a sinister purpose in the change and became upset. Some one suggested that the old collector should be sent for. He arrived, told the people they were wrong, and went away. The people were content.

In so far as the official is conscious of the gulf between him and the people, he excuses it, and by far and away the most valid excuse he offers is that his work has so changed that he finds it more and more difficult to keep in touch with his district. The reports he has to supply are on the increase; his clerical work absorbs all his time. If he spends his morning, as his predecessors used to do, in listening to callers, he has to pay the penalty by sitting far into the night to finish other work. Then at the end of five years he is perhaps moved, and he has to go over the whole process of gaining confidence afresh. I have seen the truth of this with my own eyes. The work of the collector is keeping him apart from his people. We are trying to combine the spirit of the king with the genius of the clerk.

Other excuses are not so valid. "How



can we mix with them socially when they will not introduce us to their wives, or dine with us, or observe our habits?" But many will show their wives, many will dine at European tables, many are quite British in their habits. And yet between these and the British there is little social intercourse—in some places none at all. Behind all these excuses is the assumption that the Indian must become Anglicised before he can be accepted by the ruling caste. The assumption only brings out into strong relief the fatal weakness of the ruling caste itself. It is deficient in sympathy and imagination; it cannot transplant itself. The Indian cannot become English, and in these latter days is beginning to decline to try to become English; and our representatives quietly wait for the impossible as a preliminary to their fulfilling what is obviously the first duty of a governing authority such as ours, viz. to get into intimate contact with the subject people. If we cannot tolerate Indian ways in drawing-rooms and railway trains, obviously we can do no permanent good in India and should leave the place altogether.

It must be admitted that many of the Indian magnates encourage our officials in this attitude. They curry favours at the



hand of Governors and Lieutenant-Governors, and some of the most worthless sycophants in India are to be found amongst the Indian aristocracy who have seats on the Councils and hang round Viceregal Lodges and Government Houses.

Here I must refer to the growing habit of fleeing to the hills. The Indian official is particularly sensitive to any criticism of this habit, and to tell him that he ought to stay in the plains is undoubtedly an unpleasant task. But the annual migration to the hills and the prolonged stay there every year is becoming a very serious matter. It breeds extravagance both in private and in public expenditure; the gaieties which have grown up in connection with it are having a bad effect upon the administration. It is just as though the British Cabinet and the Chiefs of Departments went every winter to Monte Carlo to escape the fogs of London, and what is said in its defence—good health, better work and so on—is precisely what would be said in defence of an exodus to Monte Carlo were we to allow it to begin. The Judges of the High Court do not go; the District and Sessions Judges do not go; business houses do not remove their staffs. *Capital*, one of the most solid Anglo-Indian papers, wrote



last summer that those who say that going to the hills is necessary "do so simply from selfish motives"; and "we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that work in the plains is performed as efficiently as in the hills." The migration costs the Imperial Government nearly 900,000 rupees, or £60,000; the Madras migration costs about £3,000, that of the United Provinces £6,750, and these charges are on the increase.

To quarrel with this attempt of the Governments to seek the comfort of coolness may appear to be ungracious, but it is necessary. Some very excellent officers deplore it, and at least one Governor has frowned upon it. It results in widening the gulf between people and administrators, and, psychologically as well as geographically, it is one of the strongest influences in keeping the bureaucracy a thing in India apart.¹

¹ The absurdity of the whole thing was borne in upon me by an amusing incident which happened when I was in Simla. I was dining out one evening, and whilst the company was gathering I was being told by an important official that Simla made the administration so healthy that they got through work so easily and did it so well, that the cost of the migration was more than made up. Whilst he was proceeding there entered another important official, an Indian. He was shivering and sneezing and altogether miserable. His greeting was: "This Simla will kill me. I have hardly done a good day's work since I came here."



None of the contrasts with which India abounds is more striking than the amount of social intercourse between the two races in British India and in Native States. The rule in these States is that there is no difference between European and Indian, and it seems to be wonderfully well carried out.¹ Our officials themselves volunteer the information that when they go to British India they feel the difference. Although there was deterioration even here under the Curzon régime, it was unable to penetrate very deeply. The chief reason is very obvious. The State is a native one. Its relation with us is theoretically that of an ally, and in practice its dependence has never reached that point when our representatives could openly treat the rulers and their people as subject. Our natural arrogance has always been kept in check. We have also had to send as agents to these States men of some capacity in handling other men, that means, men of some imagination, personality, and natural sympathy. In this respect, we have not been the playthings of the accident of

¹ We noticed one marked exception. In this particular State an English schoolmistress was boycotted by the English community because she was specially friendly with the Indian people. Some of the actions of the ruler of the State had annoyed the Government.



competitive examination. The political agent is selected, he does not come out on the top in a contest between crammed men. When the appointment is honestly made—and that seems to have been generally the case, though there are unfortunate exceptions—a man of experience is chosen. The independence of the State and the capacity of the agent have been the two main factors in keeping down that offensive exclusiveness which is like a paralysis in the life of British India, and have proved conclusively that the repulsion is not natural to race and not the necessary sequel of profound differences in social life, but is merely the outcome of certain defects in the British character when it becomes an absolute sovereign over other people.

There is, however, one consistent view of a rational kind which is used to justify our attitude and which must be considered. Our service in India believes in efficiency rather than popular control, and defends itself accordingly. It does better than the people themselves could do. That is a matter of evidence. It ought to be true, seeing that we have destroyed nearly every vestige of self-government, from village panchayats upwards, within the area of our rule, and are only now beginning to



build where we previously demolished. Every year, however, with such cases as Baroda, Gwalior and Mysore before us, it becomes less true. Our efficiency indeed has not amounted to a great deal, and I write this down all the more boldly because I find the following comment in an editorial of *The Pioneer* (November 6, 1909): "What, after all, is the state of a British Indian district that we should concern ourselves with forcing the condition of differently administered territories [it is referring to Native States] up to the same level? Are the people of Howrah or Cawnpore in any way really better off or happier than those of Kandesh or Balagat?" When *The Pioneer* says that, what more need be said!

But I dispute the principle itself. Efficiency is not better than self-government. In reality the two cannot be opposed as alternatives, because both together are the ideal. In Lord Curzon's time efficiency was carried to stupid lengths. Concentration became the rule of the day; the provinces were made to feel their subordination; an unimaginative mechanism was being substituted for a contact with public opinion as the determining factor in government. The pendulum is now swinging the other way, and the idea of



efficiency as the sole test of government is being abandoned for the time being. Here, I think, the root of much evil receives its nourishment. The "superiority" of the personal manners of the official, his autocratic ways of doing things, his idea that he should do for India what he thinks is best for India, arise from the assumption that efficiency is what India wants and needs. If men were machines that would be all right, and the mechanical excellences of our Government would settle all disputes about our rule. But men have pride, will, self-respect; and consequently a Government inspired by the idea of efficiency will never be acceptable and its officials never be gracious. The annual Reports issued by the Government of Baroda may not be accurate, those of Gwalior may not be satisfactory, those of Mysore may not be reliable; but these three Governments are now doing more for the mind of India, and are helping India more to fulfil itself and to be really efficient, than the British administration itself.

Examples of how the autocratic will of officials seeking the abstraction called efficiency makes trouble are to be found in nearly every district, but the administration of the Forestry Laws will serve my purpose.



No one can doubt the good intentions of the Government in preserving what remains of the ancient forests and re-planting areas that had been laid waste; and every one knows that in order to do this some limitation had to be imposed upon the grazing and woodland rights and privileges of the people. But the necessary reforms came in conflict with an economic system built up on freedom to destroy, and a sudden change was bound to be disastrous. Thus we find that the well-intentioned administrators of the Forestry Laws imposed cruel hardships on grazing villages and upon others depending upon a free use of forestry products. Absurd punishments were imposed for straying cattle and goats, prosecutions multiplied and civil crime of the same character as poaching was manufactured. A little tact, a little skill in handling people, a little sympathy with peasants who were after all only following very ancient custom, would have made these necessary regulations far more palatable, and would by that much have saved the Government from opposition and harsh criticism.

The remedy is easily seen even if its application is not easy. Far more care must be exercised in promotions. Men are



now promoted instead of censured, and decorations are given instead of punishments. The best men in the Service look on and are sad. Good work is not rewarded. I am aware that in a Service such as that of India promotion must be mechanical to a considerable extent, but it need not be nearly so mechanical as it is. The Viceroy, the Governors and Lieutenant-Governors might take more concern about their subordinates than is done at present, and more care might be exercised in selecting men for those positions of supreme responsibility.

Here we touch something essential. I tried my hardest to find out how the Service got what reputation it has amongst the people, but I am not sure that I succeeded. In any event, I could discover no general rule. A man like the late Mr. Radice of Lucknow is beloved by everybody and mourned by everybody; men like the late Director of Agriculture for Bengal are trusted by everybody. And yet, so far as I could make out, the Service does not benefit by their virtues except to a minor degree. On the other hand, Sir Lawrence Jenkins gives a decision which the Anglo-Indian press receives with howls of execration and the effect is to re-establish confidence



amongst the people in British justice. Sometimes it appears to be the individual who acts, sometimes it is the System, and it is the System which needs reinvigorating. Changed relationships must be on a large scale or they will remain personal to the men who practise them. Young men come out with liberal British ideas, and in six months they have acquired exclusive Anglo-Indian ones. That in no way proves the superiority of the latter; it proves the strength of the System. "You *have* to yield," said a deputy-commissioner to me. "The atmosphere, the pressure, the society in which you live and move and have your being here are against you." Hence, the System cannot be reinvigorated from beneath. A strong Viceroy who could impress liberal ideas on the bureaucracy, Governors and Lieutenant-Governors willing to support him—these alone can change the System.

Moreover, the Indian service ought not to remain isolated as it now is from every Parliamentary and democratic influence, and be left to the mercy of the law of its own bureaucratic being. It claims now that it alone knows its own work, and that no one unbaked in the sun of India can profitably criticise it. The claim of course is absurd—so absurd that it almost calls for the



retort that no intelligent tourist at the end of three months can know less of India than a good half of the Civil Service. I have met men in India who had been there for a score of years. They knew few Indians, they had rarely discussed public affairs with them, they could not answer accurately some of the most elementary questions about Indian life, their opinions on current affairs were obviously the parrot repetitions of club talk or newspaper statements. In fact they were as separate from India as I am at home in London, and took their opinions of India in an even more second-hand way than I had taken mine before I set foot in Bombay. The Indian Service would benefit greatly if an interchange of officers could be arranged with the Home Service. Fresh minds would then be applied to old problems, and men trained in Parliamentary ways would contribute to the settlement of Indian difficulties. Calcutta and Simla should never be without one or more heads of departments trained in the ways of Parliamentary administration. And a still further change would be very helpful. To the Secretary of State's Council in London should be added two or three Members of Parliament. These changes would be



opposed partly because the Indian Service has come to regard India as its preserve, and promotion as its prerogative. But the best men would welcome such assistance and protection.

There is a widespread feeling that India must be governed from India and not from London, and that the bureaucracy must be as independent as the administration of a self-governing colony. Hence, whenever a question about Indian administration is put in the House of Commons, the Indian Service considers itself insulted. For the legislator to criticise the administrator is sacrilege. To hear Indian officials explain the mean reasons why certain old colleagues put questions about India in the House of Commons, and proceed to claim that no questions should be put at all because they encourage sedition and must be put by men who know nothing of the country, is a liberal education in the very worst pettiness of a bureaucracy. This is, indeed, the least lovely side of the Service. This claim to be left free from outside influence is supported by what is a very erroneous view of Indian administration. Not only is this administration not colonial self-government (to which the argument of non-interference might apply), it is not an Oriental despotism



(about the absolute autocracy of which we hear so much), nor is it merely a bureaucracy of experts. It is an alien bureaucracy. The Anglo-Indian is an Englishman first and foremost. He has no intentions of settling in India; he is always complaining of India. He is like a philanthropic slum-dweller at best. He therefore takes short views—unlike a bureaucrat native to the soil such as is found in Prussia. India is something external to its administrators, and it is therefore unusually imperative that some general public opinion other than the Freemasonry of the system of the bureaucracy should be brought to bear upon them.

The real fact is, India requires more Parliamentary influence to play upon it and not less. We are not living in the time of Akbar or Aurungzebe. The men who are making opinion in India to-day look up to Parliament, and are more and more looking down upon collectors. The Chiefs, of whom one hears so much in this connection as being disgusted with interference from London and as being shaken in their allegiance by the subordination of Viceroys to public opinion at home and by the tender treatment meted out to seditionmongers in accordance with British liberality of opinion, are dying out. One meets per-



chance a gay and gallant Sir Pratap Singh or conservative Maharana of Udaipur, but they are beginning to think of their graves, and those who will succeed them are English in thought, have been trained in their own colleges in English methods of administration, or have rubbed shoulders with budding M.P.'s at some of our own public schools and universities. Moreover, some of the Native States themselves, like Baroda, Travancore and Mysore,¹ have begun Parliamentary institutions of a kind. None of the many prophecies which one can make of India is more likely to be fulfilled than this: that every tendency in operation in India at the moment is leading towards Parliamentary government, and is influencing Indian thought so that it will turn more and more to Parliament as its real governing authority. This way should be made smooth and wide. It is no question of taking power or prestige from the Viceroy, but of bringing the whole System into closer and more organic contact with British administration. As the head of such a System the Viceroy will shine as much, and be quite as

¹ There are 100 elected representatives in the Travancore Assembly and 250 in that of Mysore, but these bodies are unfortunately not allowed to interfere in the government of the States, and are hardly even nominal legislatures.



imposing, as I saw him, a plain man in a black frock-coat, stepping from a train at Gwalior to be received by a bejewelled Maharajah.

The present method of Indian government has nothing in common with British methods. When the Crown became responsible for India the intention was to associate the Indian with his own Government and to make Parliament supreme in that Government. But things have not turned out as was intended. To govern the people as we thought best and to cease consulting them as we went along, seemed a much less troublesome method—especially with an army behind our backs—than the more democratic way. It was also said to be more efficient. Thus the bureaucracy took root and grew thick in bole and branch where it was only meant to be a shade and protection for the tender plant of self-government. Thus also it has come about that there is really less popular control and Parliamentary criticism of the Indian administration now than there was in the days of the Company, when Parliament kept a vigilant eye upon the India House. The Service is determined that this shall last. Liberal policy should challenge this claim at every point, and increase Parlia-



mentary influence and the Parliamentary spirit in Indian administration. I am no believer in sudden changes, because the pendulum violently lurched forward will speedily swing back. That is specially true of changes in India which the System resists. Nor can the changes be brought about by controlling dispatches from London. They can be effected only through the policy of Viceroys, Governors and Lieutenant-Governors who agree that it is wise to make them.

A Viceroy will go to India one day, I hope, who will be steeped in Liberal traditions, and whose political mind will be made up of axioms of government which have sprung out of Liberal experience. Two grand characteristics will then mark his rule. He will try no heroics of administration; he will not seek to raise a monument to himself by some "new departure," either in patching up old buildings or in changing the outward forms of government. This characteristic, though negative, will not be slightly regarded by any one who knows India. The second will be a change in the spirit of the administration. This again will not of necessity be marked by changes in legislation, though some must be made. The most that will happen will be that the Sys-



tem will feel that a new hand is driving it, just as a horse knows the kind of rider who is on its back. The System has responded to the recent reforms; the System has great capacity to respond to other and even greater reforms—the reforms that a truly great Viceroy would make in its spirit, its political assumptions, its points of view. Finally, the India Office is becoming too afraid to do good, and perhaps the greatest of all the services of this ideal Viceroy of whom I dream, is that he will encourage the India Office to take more responsibility.



VII

WHAT IS TO BE THE END?

"WHAT," I asked nearly everybody I met whose opinion was of importance, "is your conception of the end which is being worked out by our Indian administration?" "A free and independent India," replied Arabindo Ghose; "Self-government within the British Empire," said Mr. Gokhale; "A measure of self-government the exact amount of which I cannot quite see," answered an old sympathetic official; "British rule whilst time lasts," remarked another official of a different school. I have tried to estimate the force of the various currents in Indian life and to ascertain whither they are tending.

We must begin with Lord Morley's recent reforms, as they open a new chapter in Indian administration. Lord Morley has declared that they do not introduce Parliamentary institutions into India. That is quite true, but their potentialities and inevitable outcome must be considered as well as their actual and immediate pro-



visions. For the evolution of government clearly shows that the intention of reformers is nothing, and the internal momentum of reforms is everything. The Whigs of 1832 never meant the Reform Bill to be the beginning of democracy, but they could no more stop the working out of the forces which the Reform Bill released, or retard the fulfilment of the consequences which attended it, than they could arrest the flight of time. Now, the essential part of the recent Reform measures is the election of representatives (although this is a privilege given with a niggardly hand, the limitation does not affect the principle), the creation of non-official majorities and the granting of powers to the Councils which, if they stop short of legislative authority, do amount to a consultative authority. On the face of it this system is unstable. Privileges of election granted to Mohammedans cannot be withheld from Hindus, authorities that have to be consulted must in time become authorities whose advice has to be followed—in other words, a consultative authority becomes by the laws of its own being a legislative authority. Lord Morley has established institutions which are not only meant to represent public opinion—these institutions existed in India before—



but which are designed to impose responsibilities on public opinion. That is, Lord Morley has planted seeds the fruit of which is Parliamentary government. It may, however, take the fruit a long time to appear.

Several consequences will inevitably follow from these reforms. Indian political agitation will become more real because it will be brought up against the facts. A Council discussing a Budget will not be able to indulge in the "highfalutin." Moreover, if by good fortune any one who really represents the cultivators and takes an interest in the new industrial developments should be elected to the Councils, the whole outlook of the Indian Reform movement will change. There will be as great a split in the old Liberal movement in India, represented by the Congress—the movement of the rich and the educated against the monopoly of political power by the bureaucracy—as there has been in home politics owing to the rise of the Labour Party. Or, I may put it in this way. There is no party politics in India at present, only the opposition of the official and the non-official, supplemented recently by the opposition of the Moslem League to the Congress. This is all for the bad. But the Reforms give hope that political conflicts on new lines will



arise. These will establish the conditions under which an extension of Reform in a Parliamentary direction will not only be necessary but desirable.

The burden of the attack on our finances will relate to expenditure. Leaving out of account such large questions as that of military expenditure, nobody who has seen India and the conditions of Indian government will deny that there is great extravagance. The European Service is extravagant, the conditions under which it rules are extravagant, the cost of Simla, Ootacamund and other hill stations is extravagant, the expenditure on official residences and other paraphernalia is extravagant. We may expect a relative diminution in the number of Europeans in the Service, and the demand of the Indian that Civil Service examinations shall be held in India will receive augmented support. But this will not relieve the finances, for two great sources of increasing expenditure must soon receive attention. The first is the low pay of subordinate officers. At present policemen, chuprassies, lower-grade clerks and others at the bottom of the Service receive so little wages that they must accept and even exact bribes in order to live at all. Then there is the demand for more general educa-



tion which is being heard all over India. This means the training of teachers and the increasing of their pay, the provision of accommodation and the supply of school stores; and, although Indians are quite willing to pay for the education of their children, the tradition of the country is that education should be free, and the poverty of the people is such that any scheme which is to reach all must be one of the open door and the free invitation to enter.

The new Councils will therefore be beset from the beginning with financial difficulties, and the only safe policy is for us to take them fully into our confidence and frankly make them our financial associates. The new accumulations of Indian wealth will thus be tapped, and Indian politics will pass from the more or less dangerous stage of being an opposition to the bureaucracy and a claim to share its authority, to being organised expressions of tendencies and forces internal to Indian social life itself.

Truly the ship of Parliamentary government is launched. The hands at the helm are perhaps timorous; the officers are not certain that she is seaworthy. They had better let these feelings pass. The Rules and Regulations issued for the control of the elections were not worthy of us. But these



will disappear. The bureaucracy will find new honour and satisfaction in facing with the success which it certainly can command the more difficult problems of governing India with the consent and advice of the people. It is better to be a politician than a Civil Service clerk, and the Indian civilian will find that out in due course.

These are some of the questions that lie at our feet, but we must go beyond them and face the more comprehensive one which I put to many friends. What is evolving through all these changes? Is a united India to emerge? Is it to learn afresh the arts it has forgotten? Is its glory to be within or without our rule?

There are indications of the future which any one can observe to-day. In the first place, it is easy to exaggerate the political influence of the separation of races which exists in India, and even the separation of creeds and castes. The Indian multitudes are passive. The mighty waves of conquest which rolled again and again over India hardly affected the people. They were killed, they were plunged into poverty, they had to alter their faith. But the changes made by these things were superficial. Even when the Hindu became Mussulman he altered little, and to this day the spirit of his



ancient faith haunts him and he still takes part in his old festivals and worships at his old shrines. It has been said that the spirit of the Vedas influences Hindu and Moham-medan alike in India. We have left deeper marks than any of our predecessors, but even to-day, when one leaves the town behind and goes into the village, one understands how little has been changed and how much has been unchanged. We have taught the people peace, we have made them forget arms; and if the Government allows them to till their fields and worship their gods, the great mass of the Indian people will go through life undisturbed by the differences which distinguish them from their fellows.

The leaders of the old warlike races like the Rajputs are being transformed by education. "The old ways are passing," sighed the Maharana of Udaipur to me. This Maharana is the custodian of the ancient spirit. He boasts that his blood has not a taint of the Moslem in it. In a new wing of his palace filled with the trash of Tottenham Court Road sits his son and successor, speaking English, eager to discuss English affairs, specially interested in our Parliamentary government. Even the Pathan who for long was the stock argument of the Anglo-Indian against the possibility



of Indian national unity is changing. An escort through the Khyber is now largely a formal thing; and besides, this long-haired, square-faced hero of a hundred raids is turning his craft to the making of money. He too bows to the inevitable law of things. Contact and the interlacement of interests lead not only to peace but to unification. The Pathan as the stage army of the anti-nationalist Anglo-Indian is melting away.

Two obstacles still remain, caste and the recent organisation of Moslem opposition to political Hinduism. The difficulty of caste is diminishing, however, even if slowly. A select few have revolted against its tyranny, and although Indian society as a whole resists in a most remarkable way every breach of caste rules, punishing the transgressor with the most dire consequences of boycott and banishment, there is much greater freedom of intercourse between different castes than there was. Education is providing a great willingness to change caste rigidity, if only a beginning on a sufficiently large scale were made; and winking at breaches of caste is becoming more and more common. I have eaten with Brahmins who, of course, remained in caste, and I have been entertained by their stories of how they elude the consequences of their



acts. In addition to all this, the Nationalist movement seems to have the effect of fusing the castes. Its religious counterparts, like the Arya Somaj and the revival of Hinduism in Bengal, are strongly anti-caste; and if corresponding movements in Bombay do not run with the same force in the same direction, we must remember that the Mahratta Brahmin has still a keen feeling regarding the destruction of his authority not yet a century ago. The battles he fought are still fresh in his memory, and his forts, mocking him from every hill, keep these recollections green. His nationalism is therefore more personal and more bitter than that of any other section. Caste will continue for many generations embodied in ceremonies and habits, and it will hamper the development of a complete national unity, by putting difficulties in the way of the choice of national leaders and by keeping alive feelings of separateness of a fundamental character. But it will be in the nation as it has been in the small section of pioneers. Caste will give trouble, but it will not be able to make effort abortive.

The relations between the Hindu and the Mohammedan are, at the moment, the greatest obstacles in the way of unity. The Mohammedan community was never heartily



associated with the Congress. It was represented there by some of its very best people, like the Tyabji family, but it is a delusion to believe that Congress ever roused the imagination of the Mohammedans. When that is admitted, we must not forget that one of the reasons for this is the general backwardness of the community itself. Education is at a low ebb in it; it has not come to the forefront in commerce and industry; it has tilled, and the nimble Hindu intellect has exploited it. It has slept in its old ways. Its leaders decided against progress. The stream of events ran past the community and left it behind, proud but impoverished, cherishing fame that had faded. A few members rebelled, and some of them associated themselves with the Nationalist movement, but the great majority had no sense of unity except Pan-Islamism. Their life centred round a shrine, not round a political capital. In India they were a *community* only. Nationality was a sentiment of which they had not a particle. Some of their leaders emphatically repudiated it.¹ But the Congress leaders saw that

¹ For instance, Mr. Mohamed Shafi, the able leader of the Punjab Mohammedans, in his Presidential Address at the meeting of the Punjab Provincial Moslem League, October 22, 1909.



it was essential that they should have a Mohammedan allegiance, and they tried to get it from the very beginning.

Things went smoothly till the beginnings of Parliamentary government were seriously discussed. Mohammedans had previously become aware of the blunder of their leaders in declaring against a modern education, and had taken active steps to repair the mistake. They had founded Aligarh in 1875, and into their minds had crept the idea of a great educational institution which would be not merely the seat of Mohammedan learning, but the centre of Mohammedan public life and a stimulus to an all-round Mohammedan revival. They have been fortunate in their Aligarh leaders. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, the founder of the College, was a man of unusual parts, and in his later years enjoyed without challenge the headship of the community in India. The present secretary of the College, Nawab Vikar-ul-Mulk Bahadur, late Premier of Hyderabad, holds the same position; and every effort will be made to retain this authority for the leading Mohammedan official at Aligarh.

The Mohammedan community, though increasing in numbers, found itself diminishing in influence. It was not securing its



fair share in Government offices; it was being left behind in the race for wealth; it was having little influence on public opinion. In short, the community was a mass without weight. Aligarh arose, and its task was to turn out every year a body of Mohammedans educated to take their part in the public life. The community was fighting for self-preservation. When Lord Curzon's educational policy resulted in an increase in the cost of education, Aligarh protested because, in the first place, high fees were a serious handicap to the poor Mohammedan community, and, in the second, the old "good" Mohammedan families had become very poor in so many instances that the effect of high fees was to select for education men from the less valued strata of Mohammedan society. When Mr. Archbold, then the head of Aligarh, was suspected of favouring Lord Curzon's policy, began to hint that the number of pupils should be restricted, and indicated an opposition to funds which had been started from which fees of students were being paid, how could the trustees view the situation except in a hostile spirit? An expensive and a limited Aligarh would not fulfil their idea of turning out a maximum number of men who, having



passed certain examinations, would be in a position to fill the offices in public and private life which are like bulwarks of defence to the community to which these men belong.

They were quick to see, moreover, that an extended political liberty might, at the moment, be dangerous for them unless their share in it was specially protected. Hence they journeyed to Simla in 1906, and laid their claims for special representation before the Viceroy. They were not in a position to defend themselves in the open field, they said. If the contest for all the prizes were to be open, they feared that few, if any, would fall to their lot, so they asked that some should be specially reserved for them.

It is necessary to understand that the Moslem movement is inspired solely by considerations affecting itself.¹ I have read carefully its literature and have discussed its intentions with some of its leading spirits. The Mohammedans take their stand upon

¹ This is naïvely expressed in a sentence which I take from the address of the President of the Kurachee Conference (December 29, 1907) of the All-India Moslem League: "I know of nothing which has been more productive of concrete results for the benefit of our selves than that great and memorable deputation which, in October 1906, went to Simla."



the right of Mohammedanism to share in the government of India. They desire judges in the Courts, representatives in the public service, spokesmen under their own control on every public authority from District Boards to University Senates and school text-book Committees. They claim these things, not as a minority requiring protection, but as a distinct section of Indian society whose religious differences with the rest express not only an historical separateness but also a civic one. Numerical proportions, therefore, do not satisfy them. They claim effective power. They rank themselves as special allies with us in the Empire, and to their position in India they wish added influence in consideration of their importance as part of Pan-Islamism and their distinction as late rulers of the country.¹ They regard India as a federal

¹ "As a community the Mohammedans contribute largely to the defence of the Empire, and have also the weight of their Pan-Islamic relation to enhance the value of their position in India."—Ali Imam, in Presidential Address to All-India Moslem League Congress, Amritsar, December 30, 1908. "We are the representatives of our co-religionists in various parts of this Empire."—Mohammed Ali, B.A. (Oxon.), at above Conference. A short speech by Mohammed Yakub puts the whole case so well, that I give it practically in full as printed in the official Report of the Conference, without any correction of the sentences: "The number of Mohammedans in the Judicial Line of



government of Hindu and Mohammedan, and desire a fixed representation for the same reasons as the American and Australian States have insisted upon an equality of representation (irrespective of population) in the Senates of these countries.

The community was slow to respond to the efforts of its leaders. The Indian National Congress was formed in 1885, and immediately made overtures to the Moham-

the Province of Agra is very inadequate and unless prompt and effective measures are taken to make up the deficiency, the Mohammedans will, in the course of a few years, nearly disappear from the higher grade of this most important branch of Government service. In the last quarter of the year 1908 out of twenty-one sub-Judges there were only four Mohammedans, out of whom two are on the eve of retirement, and will, according to the graduation given in the civil list, be succeeded by Hindus; and the whole province of Agra, one of the most advanced Mohammedan Provinces in India, will have only two Muslim sub-Judges. In the grade of Munsifs the situation is far from being satisfactory and out of a total number of sixty-nine there are only twelve Mohammedans. Although we can never admit that our share in the Government service or anywhere else should be in proportion to our numerical strength and in any kind of representation, direct or indirect, we justly claim a share equal to our Hindu brethren, owing to our special importance and the position which we occupied in India a little more than a hundred years ago. Still even according to the view taken by Sir Antony (now Lord) MacDonnell, the most unsympathetic English Governor that the Mohammedans of India ever had, out of every five there ought to be two Mohammedans in the Judicial Line."



medans. Syed Ahmad Khan closely watched the movement for three years, then decided against it, and in 1887 called a Mohammedan Educational Conference during the Christmas week. This Conference decided against the Congress. A Patriotic Association was formed in August 1888, which expressed its opposition to the Congress. In 1893 an Upper Indian Defence Association of the Mohammedans was formed by Syed Ahmad and his followers to supplement the work of the Patriotic Association, which had been too spasmodic. On the death of Syed Ahmad in 1898 the Upper Indian Defence Association practically died too. In 1901 a controversy regarding the script and language to be used in the courts of the United Provinces brought the Mohammedans into co-operative activity again under the auspices of Nawab Vikar-ul-Mulk. The Association hung fire until political reforms appeared over the horizon and the famous deputation went to Lord Minto on October 1, 1906. The All-India Moslem League was formed on December 30, 1906. The political successes which have rewarded the efforts of this League are so fresh in the public mind that I need not refer to them specifically. They have been so signal as to give support to a suspicion that sinister



influences have been at work, that the Mohammedan leaders were inspired by certain Anglo-Indian officials, and that these officials pulled wires at Simla and in London and of malice aforethought sowed discord between the Hindu and the Mohammedan communities by showing the Mohammedans special favour.¹ The Mohammedans received representation far in excess of their numbers, and they were granted a franchise far more liberal than that given to the Hindus.

Whether this was done deliberately and diabolically on the principle of "Divide and Rule," or whether it was a mere blunder showing once again how very little some of our responsible officials understand India or can estimate the effect of their actions,

¹ I do not want to encumber this work with the details of things which must pass away rapidly. But to show how unfair the Rules and Regulations are under which the Reforms were begun I may explain the conditions of Eastern Bengal. A Hindu must pay 5,000 rupees as revenue, a Mohammedan 750 rupees only, as qualification for a vote for the Zemindari election. The cess qualification of the former is 1,250 rupees, of the latter 188 rupees. The payment of income tax, the receipt of a Government pension and the being an Honorary Magistrate do not qualify Hindus for voting. They do qualify Mohammedans. Qualifications for election on the Provincial Council show the same injustice to the Hindu. And this, be it remembered, is not in a Province where there is a Mohammedan minority, but an overwhelming Mohammedan majority.



the public cannot say, because the true explanation of Lord Minto's speeches, Lord Morley's counter-speeches and the contradictory dispatches is still a secret. But be the explanation that it was a plot or a blunder, the first effect of the arrangement has been to drive apart the two communities, to undermine the influence of Congress and the Moderates, and to throw the sane and the constitutional Nationalist camp into something like consternation. In the Punjab a separate Hindu Congress has been inaugurated. A writer (said to be Rai Bahadur Lal Chand, an ex-Judge of the Chief Court) said in *The Punjabee*: "The Hindu press is wedded to the Congress cry, and is equally hesitant to advocate purely Hindu interests. This self-abnegation in politics which the Hindu community has adopted to achieve the foundation of an Indian nation, is suicidal." In Bombay the effect was not so marked, partly on account of the number of Mohammedans who are known to be favourable to the Congress; and though the gross over-representation of Mohammedans on the Bombay Councils, particularly the Bombay section of the Viceroy's Executive Council, has irritated the Constitutionalists, they are waiting patiently in the belief that the injustice and absurdity of the present ar-



rangement are so palpable that changes must take place. In Bengal the blow to Constitutionalism has been more staggering. The Constitutionals are there beset by an active and enthusiastic left wing which has ceased to put trust in piecemeal reforms and which desires that a policy of general boycott should be adopted. This left wing has the support and sympathy of many able men, and, if properly led, would influence far more than it has the Nationalist movement in Bengal. When the Councils Bill was published and the favours shown to the Mohammedans declared, the left wing's comment was: "We told you so. Your Congress method has broken down. You do not get what you wanted, and the Mohammedans, who can cultivate the weaknesses and the prejudices of Government better than you can, have been armed to make abortive what little victory you have gained. Have done with the whole thing." The Moderates found it difficult to reply to this attack. But they said: "Wait till the whole scheme is published. We must see the Rules and Regulations before passing a final judgment on the scheme." When the Rules and Regulations were published they made things worse by disclosing in detail the superior position of the Mohammedans



and by adding to that certain disqualifications for the Hindus. Meanwhile the left wing was in great glee. The futility of the Congress appeared to be written in flaring letters across the whole scheme. "Our sympathisers in Bengal have been increased by thousands," said a left-wing leader to me the day after *The Gazette* containing the Rules was published.

This was the position in the early days. Hindu and Mohammedan were estranged more than they had been for many years, constitutional reform received a staggering blow, Hindus went about saying that it was no good trying further to co-operate with Mohammedans for national purposes, and Mohammedans were making no secret of their delight and of their determination to continue the policy which had yielded them so much. In Hindu eyes, the Mohammedans had sold their Indian birthright for a smile from the Government.

And yet I am convinced that this mischief is nothing but a passing disturbance. The method of election must be altered. It is too absurd to stand the criticism of common sense. The Mohammedans should be secured representation proportionate to their numbers. India provides those unfortunate conditions which make proportional



representation a desirable expedient, and a carefully devised scheme of proportional representation will give the Mohammedans that protection to which they are entitled. Some of the far-seeing members of the Mohammedan community are already beginning to feel that they have made a mistake. Several spoke to me with bitterness about the way that certain of their leaders had consented to play a game planned for them by Anglo-Indian officials, whilst in the minds of others who were still in favour of what had been done a knowledge was dawning that there were dangers ahead and that they might have been better protected if they had not asked for so much. Few of them could be induced to defend the privileges given to Mohammedans in Eastern Bengal and the Punjab where they are actually in a majority, whilst the Aligarh school was exceedingly displeased with the mixed electorates and the enfranchisement of uneducated Mohammedans. A change in the direction of fairer play all round is inevitable, and if our officials were wise they would hasten it.

Further, the time of greatest friction is whilst the Councils are being elected and people are feeling the unfairness of the system. So soon as the Councils start



work, the method of election will slip into the background and the action of members alone will be considered. Now, I have been unable to discover any point in immediately practical affairs in which there is any difference between Hindu and Mohammedan. Both will scrutinise Government finance from the same point of view; both will complain of the burden of taxation; both will oppose certain army charges being put upon the Indian Exchequer; both will be divided in the same way over land legislation; both will unite in protesting against the treatment of Indians in the Transvaal; both will support an increase in the number of Indians employed in the Civil Service; both will vote for the removal of the Excise duty on cotton, and both, if they have a chance, will declare for protection for Indian products; both will favour the separation of judicial and executive functions; both will urge that more should be done to educate the young; both will oppose official dominance in municipal government; both will support an Indian volunteer movement, and both will protest against the insolence of official manners. The Mohammedan may or may not continue to oppose Swaraj, Home Rule, self-government, on the literary ground that no one has defined its exact



meaning by classifying what powers of legislation and administration belong to Swaraj and what can be exercised by a subordinate authority; but that will be found to be of little practical importance. So also will be the opposition which the Mohammedan may offer to some of the more recent Bengal activities like boycott. But they will not disagree about Swadeshi, the voluntary patronage of the products of home industries in preference to those of foreign countries, including Great Britain.

The Nationalists will be able to make the pace on the Councils. They can put subjects on the Order Paper and force divisions, and in the vast majority of instances the Mohammedans, representing the opinion of educated sections of their community, cannot oppose. For the educated Mohammedan community drifts towards the Congress as it inevitably must, and the representatives cannot pull against the stream.

I therefore do not believe that the estrangement which I saw is to be permanent. Everywhere, except in the Punjab perhaps, it was tending to disappear even whilst I looked on.¹ Sir Syed Ahmad Khan

¹ I do not desire to minimise the gravity of the distinction which separates Mohammedan from Hindu, but, on the other hand, it must not be exaggerated. Many



did not merely give advice but penetrated into the heart of things when he said in 1884: "Remember the words Hindu and Mussulman are only meant for religious distinction. . . . In the word 'nation' I therefore include both Hindus and Mohammedans." In the Native States the religions are not a basis for political division. A Mohammedan is Chief Justice in Gwalior, the premier of Hyderabad is a Hindu. And when these differences have disappeared in British India the union which will follow will be closer than if there had been no initial soreness. The Mohammedans will have experienced the uselessness of privi-

Mohammedans are still Hindus in spirit. They have been converted often for other than religious reasons. There is a couplet one meets with in the Punjab which runs:

Last year I was a weaver, this year I am a Sheikh,
Next year, if grain is dear, I shall be a Syed.

The weaver is a low-class Hindu. He is converted to Mohammedanism to gain social recognition. If he gets good prices for his corn next year he will be rich and will assume the title given to descendants of the Prophet. A story is told of an officer who entered a village in the Delhi district, and found the Mohammedan headman putting a coat of oil on an idol whilst a Brahmin sat by reciting texts. They explained that a Mullah had just gone through and had seen the idol. He was furious and ordered it to be buried. It had been dug up after his departure, and was being propitiated by being rubbed with oil.



leges for which their hearts might have hankered for long; the Hindu is always willing to stand on the Nationalist platform with the Mohammedan, and will forget quite readily his present soreness. If it be true that the difficulty has been deliberately created by a few scheming Anglo-Indians, they have sadly miscalculated the effect of their projects.¹

I see the real difficulties of Nationalism in quite other directions. The Indian lacks discipline, steady perseverance and courage to oppose the ruling race in his Councils. He is not endowed with the faculty of cohesion. Too many of his titled leaders are

¹ "I challenge the Moslem League to produce a single instance from the records of well-known municipalities in those Provinces in which Hindus in a body have voted against Mohammedan interests, one instance in which the Hindus have combined against Mohammedan members of a Board, one in which European and Mohammedan members have had to vote against the Hindu majority. . . . Only two years ago a Mohammedan candidate made a serious effort to enter the Council at the election held by the first group of District Boards. He was successful in securing ten votes against the Hindu candidate, and the election ended in a tie. Of the ten who voted in favour of the Mohammedan candidate, against his Hindu rival, four were Hindus. On three occasions these Provinces returned a Mohammedan member to the Imperial Council though the majority of voters consisted of Hindus."—Presidential Address to Third United Provinces Conference, by Ganga Prasad Varma.



worthless characters. Personal feelings move him greatly. He splits up his organisation. He is easily deluded by any one who tells a tale. His press is the most plausible in the world, and perhaps the most inaccurate—although recent developments in our own run the Indian vernacular press very hard. All this makes for weakness in the Nationalist movement and retards its effective organisation. It may also mean that the new Councils will never be of any use. This is the result of generations of ancestors deprived of all responsibility for the ordering of their own lives. But again, new men are arising, and this difficulty too will disappear.

A still more formidable one is the Anglo-Indian community. The Service cannot be expected to welcome the Nationalist spirit, though a section, not at all mean in numbers and still less mean in ability, readily admits that Indian Nationalism must grow in influence. But the Service as a whole is opposed. It has even gone the length of condemning as seditious the most innocent phraseology of Nationalism, of asking the judiciary to ban the singing of "Bande Mataram," and to treat as dangerous political characters those who criticise its actions. It has sought to widen the scope of sedition

until it should include everything that was not flattery. Above all, it has resorted to the tyrannical method of deportation without trial, and without even stating to the accused what his fault is. In no single instance has a really dangerous person been deported. The Government has had to confess that it made a mistake regarding Lajpat Rai, and if the Simla gentlemen were to publish to the world the evidence upon which they sent away from their homes and put under lock and key the nine reputable gentlemen who are at present¹ victims of official panic, they would reveal a farce which would justify the dismissal of every one who played a serious part in it. One man I know was deported because he was treasurer of a fund collected for the defence of his nephew, whose trial ended in his acquittal. To crown all, the Service feels grossly insulted that the judiciary should venture to apply ordinary rules of evidence in State trials and acquit persons accused officially. To hear officials discuss the merits of some of the recent State trials is a painful revelation of a condition of mind blind for the time being to legal justice and individual civil liberty; to hear them characterise some Indian

¹ They have since been released.



movements like the Arya Somaj with a lofty indifference to strict fact and evidence, is an amazing reminder of how completely nature robs bureaucracies of the political instinct. Nationalism will have to contest every foot of its advance with the Service.

But here, too, there are modifying influences at work. The pompous Imperialism of the Curzon rule no longer coarsens the official mind; the sympathetic elements in the Service are being strengthened; Parliamentary conditions are becoming prevalent; the High Courts have resisted official pressure and Anglo-Indian clamour, and have kept just; the Government has come very badly out of trials which it entered upon without careful investigation, and which it undertook with manufactured evidence. Indian opinion will have freer play to develop.

A community which is generally forgotten in discussions of the Indian question must not be overlooked here. The commercial Anglo-Indian community is different from the Service. It comes in contact with different sides of Indian life; it has interests which the Service knows nothing about; it has stakes in the country which it has to defend. Its opinions are difficult



to get at. They are indeed mixed. But the community is conscious that it is in a minority. It therefore has not the desire for self-government that our other colonists have. It is, indeed, not a colony. Its members do not mean to live and die in India. They are but trading sojourners there. If they have happened to be born there they are looked down upon. "Indian" families are not those who have lived there for generations, but those who have done some service there, who have sent their children to be brought up in England, and have returned on their pensions or their savings to die in one of the Home Counties. Nationalism means to this commercial community the supremacy of what is now its subject race. I do not think that it regards such an event with the feelings of strong opposition which possess the Services, but it does not welcome the change. It prefers to let things drift, and would be glad if they did not go away very far from their present position—for one reason, because it is afraid of the economic policy of a Native Indian Government. It has its extreme right wing, however, which supports newspapers like *The Englishman*, and is as bitterly racial in its prejudices as Anglo-Indians can be.



On the whole I therefore regard the future as belonging to Nationalism. India will not arise all at once, and if we are wise the day when it goes so far as to threaten us with expulsion is so remote that we need hardly think of it at all. In this connection, one consideration must not be forgotten. Whilst the best and the most ardent minds will speak of *India*, political freedom will come first of all through provincial Home Rule. There is so much individuality in the Provinces that India would lose seriously if it were obliterated. That was another of the many colossal blunders of Lord Curzon. His mind ran on centralisation; the genius of India needs decentralisation for its expression. The general lines of our government are good if they were a little freer. Responsible government in the Provinces, a federation of the Provinces in an Indian Government—that seems to me to be the way India is to realise herself—is, in fact, realising herself.

A discussion of at what point British sovereignty in India will end owing to the evolution of Indian Nationalism and self-government must not overlook the problem of the Native State. The importance of this factor can be seen by a mere statement



of the extent of Native rule. Of the area of India, 680,000 square miles are under Native government; of the population, 62,500,000 inhabit Native States and 232,000,000 British India. But even these figures give an inadequate impression. The ruler of the Native State is becoming more and more enlightened. He has probably been educated in England, and in any event he has been taught in one or other of the Chiefs' colleges, like the Mayo College at Ajmere, where he has been instructed in English literature, political economy, the principles of government, and similar subjects.¹ He comes to his Government, as a rule, with high notions of his responsibility and a determination to master every detail of his work. Such reports as those published annually by the State of Gwalior, in which are included criticisms of every department by the Maharajah himself, are a revelation of the new spirit of the Indian rulers, whilst the enlightenment of Baroda

¹ I found in an examination paper which the chiefs' sons attending the Mayo College had to answer, the following questions among others: Explain an aeroplane, suffragette, Free Fooder, the Duma, Paardeberg, Cabinets, the issues of the Civil War, Factory Acts, Repeal of the Corn Laws; and amongst the subjects for an essay was "The old order changeth, yielding place to new."



and Mysore dims in some respects the lustre of our own rule.¹

¹ The following extracts from one or two recent Reports of the State of Gwalior, written by the Maharajah, seem to be worth reproducing :

From the Report of 1906-7. "I have to note with regret that the engineer who has been appointed specially for conducting steam-ploughing operations has shown himself wanting in zeal, and has failed to give satisfaction with his work, and the Durbar will now have to make other arrangements for working out the scheme."

"I hope the member in charge will advise ways and means in the ensuing year for bringing up the management to the desired standard of efficiency."

"The Board will deal with this point in their next year's report, and satisfy me that this is not the case."

"The work done during the year was satisfactory, but the tour made by the officer in charge of this department was not sufficient."

"The Department has been well managed during the year, but I think that the superintendent ought to have completed his tour after his recovery from illness, particularly as there was no specified season for his touring."

"The report is anything but full and satisfactory, and the record of the year's work is meagre. The work of demarcation has not been carried out to my satisfaction."

"I therefore desire all officers to take warning from my present comment that the care bestowed on accounts in most Departments is not to my satisfaction."

"Considering the nature of the Accountant-General's engagements during the certain so-called touring days, I cannot allow those to be reckoned as tour."

"I regret to find that the Steam Laundry is still a languishing concern, and I hope that the member in charge will make every effort to bring it up to a flourishing state."

"The Mining engineer's work has so far been barren of



Apart from the growing enlightenment of the rulers, their pride has never diminished since they led their armies into the field and played with high political stakes in battle. They would not join as subordinates in a Native Indian Government, and none of themselves is sufficiently ahead of all the others, either in religious or in political prestige, to become an accepted Chief of the federated States. This condition is likely to be accentuated rather than smoothed over. For, in our policy of decentralisation which we are bound to follow if our

any profitable results, and I think it wants a little more perseverance and assiduity to discover something workable."

"I hope that he will see that the accounts of the Department are better kept."

From the Report for 1907-8. "I also fail to see how the insufficiency of rainfall should tend to reduce the number of serviceable tanks. If there is no rain the tanks would not fill, but the absence of water in the tanks need not make them unfit to hold water."

"In the end I am constrained to say that the praise which I had bestowed upon the Police last year has not apparently served as an incentive to better work, and that the necessary amount of strictly vigilant supervision has not been exercised."

"This discrepancy in statements and facts is very regrettable, and I trust its being thus brought on record will lead to its cessation in the future. I much regret that the progress claimed and affirmed should not be real, but also rely on its being made so before next year's report is written and reviewed."



government is not to break down helplessly on its human side, we shall give more prestige to the rulers of Native States. For instance, the utility of the subsidised minor chief with jurisdiction within his "parish" has passed away. When that policy was begun early last century nobody and nothing were secure. Our footing was precarious, and no rulers were established in their governments. Those who were, were fighting us. We therefore approached chiefs owing allegiance to superior rulers, and came to a bargain with them that in return for a subsidy from us they should keep their people quiet. The policy thus begun has continued to this day. These petty governments with which we keep in direct relations and which we administer in the event of minorities, should undoubtedly be merged in the Native State to which they belong.

Thus for many a long year British sovereignty will be necessary for India, for the warring elements in Indian life need a unifying and controlling power. Britain is the nurse of India. Deserted by her guardian, India would be the prey of disruptive elements within herself as well as the victim of her own too enthusiastic worshippers, to say nothing of what would



happen to her from incursions from the outside. Coerced by her guardian, she will be an endless irritation and worry. Consulted by her guardian, and given wide liberty to govern herself in all her internal affairs, she may present many difficulties and create many fears, but that is the only way to abiding peace and to the fulfilment of our work in India.



VIII

LAST THOUGHTS

I SPENT part of my last day in Calcutta in the laboratory of Professor J. C. Bose at the Presidency College. I had heard him once in England deliver a weird lecture on the poisoning of metals, and I had not forgotten the impressive ending of his discourse when he recalled the ancient science of his people, and left us with expectations that the breath of awakening might even then be blowing across the subtle intelligence of India and be giving birth to a new epoch of scientific discovery.

In Calcutta, that day, he took up the parable he left unfinished at the Royal Institution in Albemarle Street. By various strange devices he showed us how plants indicated that they felt blows inflicted upon them, how they shrank, how they shuddered, and, most mysterious of all, how they died. A flickering beam of light passed right and left along a scale as the stems and leaves

we were torturing protested against our cruelties, until the point was reached when no more response came. At that point a shudder passed through the fibres of the plant, just as the muscles of a human being contract in convulsive movement when his last breath passes his lips. All was then still. The organism was beginning to decay into its elements. Death had come.

Looking upon these experiments I felt as though I were in the sanctuary of a magician rather than in the laboratory of a chemist.

The night before I had had an interview with one of India's troublesome editors. I sought him in the native part of the city amongst those torrents of beings which bewilder and dumfounder the European. I found him in a place that might have been an Italian palace. There was an ample courtyard, carved screens and balustrades, shady stairs. But decay spoke from every stone. As I entered, the red gleams of the setting sun struck its top and threw its bases into dark shadow. I seemed to have made tryst there with the night.

"Here," said he whom I had come to see, ushering me into a wide room bare of furniture saving for a table and a chair or two, "Here we worship. Let us talk of



the things of the spirit"; and he embarked upon an extraordinary account of the worship of Shri Krishna, of whom his family were devotees. His brother had ceased to trouble about the things of life, and this one too longed for the time when he could lay down his pen, hand the paper over to another, and retire to be alone with his own being. He often took me by the hand as a father does a child and patted me as he told me of the tribulations which beset a man's feet through life, and of the sorrow that waited upon men. As I now write I can hardly resist the belief that in some way he saw the shadow that was then hanging over me. There were tears in his eyes as he spoke of India. Sitting thus at the long table, darkness fell upon us. Yellowish red patches appeared on the walls from the lights outside, and strains of music came in at the windows.

We went out together. It was the evening of a Matripuja. The Mother Goddess had been dwelling in the midst of the people for some days, and this night, with music and procession, she was to be taken down to the Ganges. Lights were in every house. Band after band passed us. The goddess herself riding on her lion carried aloft and adorned in all kinds of tinsel and colour, under all



kinds of canopies, was to be seen everywhere on her way to the sacred river. Men made merry; the hearts of women were sad, for the goddess is a welcome guest with them. The torches flared, the bands of music shrieked, the crowds shouted and bustled—and over all shone the Mother, the Giver of Life, in her gaudy paints and draperies. In India to-day it is always “the Mother,” and it was her festival that bade us farewell in Bengal.

When one thinks over all these extraordinary impressions of things new, weird, and mysterious, he seems to be drawn below the superficial differences seen at the silver-smiths’ corner in the bazaar of Bombay. These differences are but the light split up into fragments, iridescent, many-coloured, glancing on the surface of things. Beneath there is unity—a blending of differences in a co-ordinating idea. Even the Mohammedan who lives away from the borders becomes enchanted with India and assimilates something of the spirit of the Vedas. The great Mosque at Ajmere, open as it is to the foot of Moslem and Hindu alike, symbolises the real mind of India. So too at Rampal, the ancient capital of Eastern Bengal, one sees Hindu images in the verandah of the mosque, and in similar



places of worship throughout the country the "common altar" is not unusual. The outcast who lives and dies in the outermost courts of the temple, and who is banished from the presence of the twice-born, hankers after admission into the holies where India dwells. The Mother they all worship is India—the India which stretches from the Himalayas to the southernmost part of Ceylon. That is the India of their religion, the India within whose borders are the sacred shrines scattered far apart, north, east, south, and west, but all sacred to all the people. Every Indian holds the Himalayas in religious reverence. The crowd on the banks of the Ganges at Benares represents every phase and race of Hindu life. "Hail, O ye Ganges, Jamna, Godavari, Sarasvati, Narbada, Sindhu, and Kavari—come and approach these waters!" is the prayer of the Northern Hindu who perhaps will never see one of those sacred rivers, but to whom the land to which they belong is a sacred personality. The Buddhist in Ceylon breathes precisely the same prayer, because he too grasps the same sense of national unity. And the modern revivals of religion with their queer blending of East and West—of rationalism and superstition—have by their worship of the Mother



greatly reinforced the part which India as the embodiment of the Hindu's faith is to play in politics. The land embodies his religion, as the image of his god embodies the cult of his worship. Only when the Indian civilisation has passed away, and when Hinduism has become a religion that has been but is no more, will the superficial differences of language and creed which the politician places so much reliance upon to-day be of fundamental and real importance. The life below is that of a united India—a religious as well as a geographical unity—and that life will continue to strive for political expression. India is a vision of the Hindu faithful as heaven is a vision of the Christian saint.

India is a place of enchantment. It baffles you: it enthrals you. It is like a lover who plays with your affections. There is something hidden in its heart which you will never know. It is maddening in its imperturbability, in its insistency. You feel insignificant before it, just as a decently minded prize-fighter would feel insignificant before a saint. The difference which separates you from it cannot be bridged. This is characteristic of everything Indian. India centred in the universal is pantheistic and



communist; the West centred in the particular is theistic and individualist. The difference is, therefore, in the essential nature of things. Thus, your attempts to understand, thwarted, laughed at, denied every time, become maddening. India eludes you to the last.

I came away full of presentiments such as possess one to whom a glimpse of some great coming event has been given. That last day in Calcutta continues to haunt me. It was a peep behind the veil. As I drove back through the crowds to my place I saw the pageantry of India, its gilded past, its patient peasant toiling till the sun goes down, its newly educated sons, subtle, resentful, proud, cherishing memories and hopes in their hearts. The smoke clouds of Bombay, the bustle of Calcutta, the ruined cities of the Ganges plains, the crowded temples and ghats of Benares, passed through my mind. Simla with its vanities both of force and frivolity, the good men of my own people who strive to do righteously, the mistaken men who walk in the darkness which will never lift from their honest minds, came up too. And it seemed to me as though the procession of the old, of India herself, were to last through the ages, whilst our dominion was to pass as the shuttle through

the warp, as a lightning flash from cloud to earth. How awe-inspiring this land and its people are! how temporary appear our dwelling-places in it! even our best deeds, are they of the stuff that abides? Our good government—a revolution could bury it in its own dusty ruins. Our material gains—a spiritual revival could shrivel them up as the sun parches the grass on the plains. Are the pursuits we have taught India to follow anything but alluring shadows? Is the wealth we are telling her to seek to be anything but dust and ashes? Is the industrial India I saw arising, begrimed and strenuous, to last and to overshadow the India one sees at the bathing ghats of Benares or feels in the Oriental library at Bankipur? The long years alone can disclose these secrets. The riddle is troublesome.

But one thing is sure as surety itself. We talk of the Bengali with a sneer. We are amused at his Babus and "Failed B.A.'s," and we are repelled by some of his characteristics. We persuade ourselves that the only way to deal with the coolie is to cuff him occasionally, and that by elbowing our way through we are impressing him with our prestige and he will accept his subordination. We can make absurd distinctions between India's educated and un-



educated classes, and imagine that to protect the one we must offend the other—as though they were not both of India. It is all a vague delusion. The impulses of Indian life will go on. They will show themselves in Science, in Art, in Literature, in Politics—in Agitation. We can welcome them, or we can try to retard them and grudge them every triumph. If we are wise, we shall do the former. We can then help India and win her gratitude and her friendship. When she is rich, as she will be, she will remember the friend of her poverty. When she is honoured for her own sake, as she will be, she will remember the patron of her obscurity. But we cannot keep her back. Her Destiny is fixed above our will, and we had better recognise it and bow to the Inevitable.

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